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THE SOCIAL ROLE OF TRUTH ACCORDING TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

A STUDY IN THOMISTIC SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

BY

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To Christ, the Way,
the Truth and the Life

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PREFACE

There is at hand a concrete example to explain the purpose and method of this dissertation. It concerns an individual whose story is told in the Gospels. The religious implications of that story are not our problem here; the social implications are. The history of the man in question has been chosen for that reason.

Pontius Pilate, St. Luke tells us, in the course of his conversations with Christ asked: "What is truth?" Of the motivation for such a question we are not certain. One can doubt that it was sincerely uttered. But suppose the Roman Governor had a burning desire for the answer to that problem; suppose he had received that answer; suppose he had directed his action in conformity with it.

In view and outlook Pilate must be classed among what we today call agnostics. For him only one thing was certain, namely, there was no objective truth. That attitude becomes more and more evident as he conducts the trial of Jesus. He is not at all convinced of the guilt of the prisoner brought before him. As a matter of fact he stated definitely that he "finds no cause in him."

Yet step by step he yielded weakly to the artfully applied pressure of men bent on destruction. Finally he issued the order for capital punishment. In the whole affair Pilate was untrue to himself, untrue to the Roman State and Law which he represented; and—because of the unique character of the One brought to judgment—untrue to Truth. Of such issue is untruth in personal and public life.

The agnosticism of which we cite Pilate as an example is just as devitalizing today. Indeed, in the light of modern developments, agnostics are themselves struggling against their mental enervation. Like Pilate's its undermining effects have weakened even to their foundations the personal, social and religious life of our time. In consequence the stark contrast between the betrayal from indifference to truth and what it should mean to society is, even though no positive contribution were made, a telling argu-

ment. However, we need not confine ourselves to just a contrast. The teaching of St. Thomas is positive enough—over and above its critical application to present thought—to offer a definite solution.

Truth is not so lightly dismissed. The mere fact that man frames the question, What is Truth? is his highest prerogative for good or evil. Presently in this dissertation the truth theories of Communism, National Socialism and Humanism as well as their effect on society shall be examined. In the light of Thomistic teaching the examination will take the direction of St. Thomas' contention that error is the corruption of truth. More than that any strength it evidences is due to the mutilated truth at the bottom of it.

The denial of objective truth is in its turn denied by the conduct of man. No small part of the allegiance from the followers of the philosophies of society above mentioned comes from the conviction of their truth. Today, though, many are turning from these philosophies because of their principles and the results of these principles in the practical sphere. But where to turn? Rejection—emotional, or even intellectual—is not enough. The question still remains: What is Truth? To that question we offer the solution of St. Thomas Aquinas. Its strength for the individual and society, we are convinced, lies not in its presentation by insinuating rhetoric, nor in verbal abuse of its opponents, and, least of all, not in its adoption under the compulsion of brute force. It finds its strength in its own true principles which are the fruit of long, patient and humble search by a truly philosophical genius. On that ground we offer it. Any seeming deficiency is the fault of the present exponent; every bit of its true worth is the contribution of a man who single-mindedly sought—Truth.

My sincere thanks are due to my superiors, the V. Rev. Coleman Byrne, C.P., and the V. Rev. Carrol Ring, C.P., under whom my studies were inaugurated and completed. I am grateful also to Doctor Ignatius Smith, O.P., for his direction and encouragement in this work and to Doctor Robert Slavin, O.P., as well as to Doctor William McDonald for the reading of the manuscript and the corrections suggested. My thanks are due finally to the many who in one way or another aided in the completion of this work.

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CHAPTER I

KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH AND FALSITY

A. KNOWLEDGE

1. *Preliminary Notions*

Men want to *know* if something is *true*. Immediately two terms stand out in that sentence—Know and True. The amplification of those two words is the problem of this chapter. What does knowing mean and how does truth result from that process? Here the answer to those questions will be that of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Immediately we must clarify our position. First, we must recognize a danger. Etienne Gilson points it out in these words:

> Five centuries of history divide us from St. Thomas, full of new systems or new formulations of old problems through which we see Thomism as it were refracted. The—in itself very legitimate—preoccupation to find in Thomistic philosophy the answer to questions which were formulated subsequently to it is apt to lead us imperceptibly to alter the sense of the problem as St. Thomas himself posited it, to coax his text in the direction requisite for adapting it to new problems, and sometimes even to press it for an answer with so little discretion in order to make his words bear the desired interpretation, as to endanger the equilibrium of the whole system. These are proceedings as little satisfactory to philosophy as they are to history. If we wish to find a Thomistic solution to the problem of knowledge the first requisite is that it should be St. Thomas'. In order to ensure that it be his, and not Descartes' or Kant's answer, we must come to it not with a Cartesian or Kantian problem—for problems raised by philosophers are part and parcel of the answers which they give them—but with the question, what would have been the form of the problem of knowledge if by an

organic development of its own principles Thomistic philosophy had ever been led to raise it.[1]

So, a primary concern must be to present as accurately as possible what the two fundamental notions "knowledge" and "truth" meant for St. Thomas.

Secondly, we must fix St. Thomas' solution in relation to the various theories of knowledge advanced by the greatest thinkers of the West. In broad outline these thinkers have been committed to one of three great traditions, all Grecian in origin. There is *sensism*, materialistic in character, which may be said to begin with Democritus. It represents an overemphasis of the object of knowledge which is material, at the expense of the subject of knowledge, which is immaterial. Then there is *intellectualism*, idealistic in character, which has its strong beginnings in Plato. It represents an overemphasis of the subject of knowledge, which is immaterial, at the expense of the object of knowledge, which is material. Finally there is *moderate realism* whose author is Aristotle. In this last tradition we definitely find St. Thomas. In that tradition our Saint develops his teaching on knowledge and truth as an integral part of his metaphysics. As will immediately become clear he regards "knowing" as a particular manner of being and hence he conceives it in terms of the fundamental distinction between potency and act, matter and form.

2. *Dignity of Knowledge*

In a beautiful passage of the *De Veritate* St. Thomas envisions the knower as contributing to and sharing in the perfection of the universe. For him there are two ways in which a thing can be found perfect. In the first according to the perfection of its own being, in what is proper to it according to its rightful species. But because the specific being of one thing is distinct from

[1] Gilson, E., *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (St. Louis: Herder, 1939), p. 260; cfr. Phelan, G., "Verum sequitur esse rerum," *Medieval Studies*, Vol. I (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1939), p. 8. "When the problem of knowledge is posited in the terms so familiar to philosophy since the seventeenth century—'How can the mind pass from knowledge to reality?'—it becomes an insoluble problem."

the specific being of another thing, the result is that in every created thing the perfection which it possesses lacks absolute perfection in the degree to which equal perfections are possessed by all other species, in such a way that the perfection of anything considered in itself alone is imperfect as being only part of the total perfection of the universe, which is born from the union of all these particular perfections gathered together in it.

So, in order that there might be a remedy for this imperfection, another mode of perfection is found in created things, according as the perfection which is the property of a thing is itself found in another thing. Such is the perfection of knowing in so far as it is such, for in the degree to which it knows the known in a certain way exists in it. And according to this mode of perfection it is possible that the perfection of the entire universe may exist in a single and particular thing.[2]

Another expression of the dignity of knowledge arises from a consideration of life and life's activity all round us. The activity which is a sign of life is twofold—transitive or immanent.[3] A transitive action is one whose term of activity is always outside the agent and which acts not for its own perfection but for the perfection of a thing distinct from itself. An immanent action, on the contrary, has its term within the agent itself, and acts for its own perfection, and not for the perfection of something

[2] "Sciendum igitur, quod res aliqua invenitur perfecta dupliciter. Uno modo secundum perfectionem sui esse, quod ei competit secundum propriam speciem. Sed quia esse specificum unius rei est distinctum ab esse specifico alterius rei; ideo in qualibet re creata hujusmodi perfectioni habitae in unaquaque re, tantum deest de perfectione simpliciter, quantum perfectius in aliis speciebus invenitur; ut cujuslibet rei perfectio in se consideratae sit imperfecta, veluti pars totius perfectionis universi, quae consurgit ex singularum rerum perfectionibus, invicem congregatis. Unde ut huic imperfectioni aliquod remedium esset, invenitur alius modus perfectionis in rebus creatis, secundum quod perfectio quae est propria unius rei, in altera re invenitur; et haec est perfectio cognoscentis inquantum est cognoscens; quia secundum hoc a cognoscente aliquid cognoscitur quod ipsum cognitum aliquo modo est apud cognoscentem. . . . Et secundum hunc modum possibile est ut in una re totius universi perfectio existat.' *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 2; cfr. III *Sent.*, d. 27, q. 1, a. 4; I *C. G.*, 44; II *C. G.*, 47; II *C. G.*, 98.

[3] *In VI Meta.*, lect., 1; *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 2; I, q. 18, a. 3 ad 1; I, q. 119, a. 1 ad 2; II–IIae, q. 179, a. 1; I *C. G.*, 97; III *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1.

outside itself: willing for example. Now if beings possess life only in proportion to their immanent activity, and "the more immanent the activity the higher the life,"[4] where do we place mind, the instrument of knowledge, in such a scale? At hand is a citation of St. Thomas that ranges through all the universe to supply the answer:

> We find different modes of emanation and further, we observe that from the higher natures things proceed in a more intimate way. Now of all things the inanimate obtain the lowest place, and from them no emanation is possible except by the action of one on another: thus, fire is engendered from fire when an extraneous body is transformed by fire, and receives the quality and form of fire.
>
> The next place to inanimate bodies belongs to plants, whence emanation proceeds from within, in as much as the plants' intrinsic humour is converted into seed, which being committed to the soil grows into a plant. Accordingly, here we find the first traces of life: since living things are those which move themselves to act, whereas those which can only move extraneous things are wholly lifeless. It is a sign of life in plants that something within them is the cause of a form. Yet the plants' life is imperfect because, although in it emanation proceeds from within, that which emanates comes forth little by little, and in the end becomes altogether extraneous: thus the humour of a tree gradually comes forth from the tree and eventually becomes a blossom, and then takes the form of fruit distinct from the branch, though united thereto; and when the fruit is perfect it is altogether severed from the tree, and falling to the ground, produces by its seminal force another plant. Indeed, if we consider the matter carefully we shall see that the first principle of this emanation is something extraneous: since the intrinsic humour of the tree is drawn through the roots from the soil whence the plant derives its nourishment.
>
> There is yet above that of the plants a higher form of life, which is that of the sensitive soul, the proper emanation whereof, though beginning from without, terminates within. Also the further the emanation proceeds, the more does it penetrate within: for the sensible object impresses a form on the external senses, whence it proceeds to the imagination and further still, to the storehouse of the memory. Yet in every process of this kind or emanation, the beginning and end are in different subjects; for no sensitive power reflects on itself. Wherefore this degree of life transcends that of plants in so much as it is more intimate; and yet it is not a perfect life, since the emanation is always from one thing to another.
>
> Wherefore the highest degree of life is that which is according to intellect; for the intellect reflects on itself and can understand itself.[5]

[4] IV *C. G.*, 11.

[5] ". . . secundum diversitatem naturarum diversus emanationis modus invenitur in rebus: et quanto aliqua natura est altior, tanto id quod ex ea emanat, magis ei est intimum.

In rebus enim omnibus inanimata corpora infimum locum tenent: in quibus emanationes aliter esse non possunt nisi per actionem unius eorum in aliquod alterum. Sic enim ex igne generatur ignis, dum ab igne corpus extraneum alteratur, et ad qualitatem et speciem ignis perducitur.

Inter animata vero corpora proximum locum tent plantae, in quibus iam emanatio ex interiori procedit: inquantum scilicet humor plantae intraneus in semen convertitur, et illud semen, terrae mandatum, crescit in plantam. Iam ergo hic primus gradus vitae invenitur: nam viventia sunt quae seipsa movent ad agendum; illa vero quae non nisi exteriora movere possunt, omnino sunt vita carentia. In plantis vero hoc indicium vitae est, quod id quod in ipsis est, movet ad aliquam formam.—Est tamen vita plantarum imperfecta: quia emanatio in eis licet ab interiori procedat, tamen paulatim ab interioribus exiens quod emanat, finaliter omnino extrinsecum invenitur. Humor enim arboris primo ab arbore egrediens fit flos; et tandem fructus ab arboris cortice discretus, sed ei colligatus; perfecto autem fructu, omnino ab arbore separatur, et in terram cadens, sementina virtute producit aliam plantam.—Si quis etiam diligenter consideret, primium hujus emanationis principium ab exteriori sumitur: nam humor intrinsecus arboris per radices a terra sumitur, de qua planta suscipit nutrimentum.

Ultra plantarum vero vitam, altior gradus vitae invenitur, qui est secundum animam sensitivam: cujus emanatio propria, etsi ab exteriori incipiat, in interiori terminatur; et quanto emanatio magis processerit, tanto magis ad intima devenitur. Sensibile enim exterius formam suam exterioribus sensibus ingerit; a quibus procedit in imaginationem; et ulterius in memoriae thesaurum. In quilibet tamen hujus emanationis processu, principium et terminus pertinent ad diversa: non enim aliqua potentia sensitiva in seipsam reflectitur. Est ergo hic gradus vitae tanto altior quam vita plantarum, quanto operatio hujus vitae magis in intimis continetur: non

3. *Nature of Knowledge*

a. Proportions

Yet, though the mind of man is at the summit of material creation it is not without its limitations. Above we see it set forth by a comparison with all below it. Now St. Thomas places it in a cosmic frame and compares it with mind above it.[6] Man's intellect makes him the greatest of material creatures, but, withal, the intellect of man is inferior to that of other intellectual beings, namely, the angels and God. To omit or neglect this second comparison is to throw out of perspective a genuine view of the intellectual nature of man. Immediately, then, before going on to the study of human understanding in itself, we can look for and find direction in the last named comparison. A continuation of the last quotation from St. Thomas summarizes the point we would make:

> The human intellect can know itself, but because it knows nothing without a sensible image the principle of its knowledge comes to it from without. The intellectual life of the angels is more perfect because their intelligence knows itself without having to make use of anything outside it. Yet, their life does not reach the highest point of perfection since their idea, which is within, is not identical with their essence, and their being and knowledge are distinct. The last perfection of life then belongs to God, for Whom to know and to be are equivalent, and in Whom the idea, understanding by idea what the intellect conceives in itself of the object known, is identically the divine essence itself.[7]

tamen est omnino vita perfecta, cum emanatio semper fiat ex uno in alterum. Est igitur supremus et perfectus gradus vitae qui est secundum intellectum; nam intellectus in seipsum reflectitur, et seipsum intelligere potest." *Ibid.*

[6] *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 15; II *C. G.*, 91; *S. T.*, I, q. 55, a. 3; I, q. 85, a. 1.

[7] "Nam intellectus humanus, etsi seipsum cognoscere possit, tamen primum suae cognitionis initium ab extrinseco sumit: quia non est intelligere sine phantasmate.—Perfectior igitur est intellectualis vita in angelis, in quibus intellectus ad sui cognitionem non procedit ex aliquo exteriori, sed per se cognoscit seipsum. Nondum tamen ad ultimam perfectionem vita ipsorum pertingit: quia, licet intentio intellecta sit eis omnino intrinseca, non tamen ipsa intentio intellecta est eorum substantia; quia non est idem in eis intelligere est esse. . . . Ultima igitur perfectio vitae competit Deo, in quo non est alius intelligere et aliud esse . . . et ita opportet quod intentio intellecta in Deo sit ipsa divina essentia." IV *C. G.*, 11.

Still consonant with the principle "the more immanent the activity, the higher the life," the greater perfection of angelic knowledge stands out in the fact that intellectuality for an angel is not a function or a superimposed and partial activity as it is in man; it is its very nature. "It has not intelligence," says St. Thomas, "it is intelligence."[8] Unlike the human intellect, the angelic intellect is always in act. While we are radically and fundamentally in potency to knowledge the angel is so only accidentally.[9] In a comparison which St. Thomas offers our mind is likened to a tablet on which nothing is written; the angelic intellect on the contrary may be compared to a tablet already written upon or to a mirror in which is reflected the reason of things.[10]

The comparison is justified in the study of the source of knowledge of these two intellects—man's and the angels'. Our knowledge comes from the material universe; angelic knowledge comes from God. Our knowledge is acquired; angelic knowledge is infused. The power of the human intelligence is not complete naturally; it is progressive in its perfection. The angelic intelligence, on the contrary, is naturally complete owing to the infused idea which it receives from God.[11] To these differences St.

[8] "Substantiae autem separatae sunt secundum suam naturam ut actu existentes in esse intelligibili. Unde unaquaeque earum seipsam per essentiam suam cognoscit, non per aliquam speciem alterius rei." II *C. G.*, 97.

[9] ". . . intellectus dupliciter est in potentia: uno modo sicut ante addiscere vel invenire; scilicet antequam habeat habitum scientiae. Alio modo dicitur esse in potentia, sicut cum jam habet habitum scientiae, sed non considerat. Primo igitur modo intellectus angeli nunquam est in potentia respectu eorum ad quae ejus cognitio naturalis se extendere potest. . . . Secundo vero modo intellectus angeli potest esse in potentia ad ea quae cognoscit naturali cognitione. Non enim omnia quae naturali cognitione cognoscit, semper actu considerat." *S. T.*, q. 58, a. 1.

[10] "Intellectus Angeli nostrum intellectum excedat, sicut res formata excedit materiam informem; unde intellectus noster comparatur tabulae in qua nihil est scriptum; intellectus autem Angeli tabulae depictae, vel speculo, in quo rerum rationes resplendent." *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 9.

[11] *S. T.*, I, q. 55, a. 2; *S. T.*, I, q. 108, a. 1; *De Ver.*, q. 8, a. 10 et ad

Thomas also adds in contrast (a) the fact of immutability in the angel because it clings immutably to the good or evil to which it has once turned, while man has a mutable vertibility, because he can go from good to evil, and the reverse; and (b) the fact that the angel expresses himself through certain intellectual signs without the vehicle of physical sound, while man speaks through the expression of sound.[12]

Going further, at the highest point in the scale of life we find Absolute Mind—God. In God, the one necessary Being, "the radical difference that divides necessary being from contingent being supposes a breach in the order of existence prolonged into the order of knowledge."[13] In no created mind is intelligence identical with essence; in God these two are the same.[14] Being and knowing are identical in God.[15] Thus "Absolute Mind is at one and the same time perfect Immanence and perfect Extensiveness penetrating to the depths of things. He alone is at home everywhere by intelligence Who knows all things by His own Essence, the unique source at once of reality and of truth. The human soul is intelligent because it has a 'passive' capacity for all being; God is intelligent because He is the active Source of all being. God's knowledge is the cause of things."[16]

1 and 3; III *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 2, a. 2, sol. 1; cfr. Sheen, *God and Intelligence* (New York: Longmans, 1925), pp. 86–90; Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 167–185.

[12] II *Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 6; cfr. Pegis, "In Umbrae Intelligentiae," *New Scholasticism*, Vol. 14, No. 2, April, 1940, pp. 146–180.

[13] Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy* (New York: Scribners, 1936), p. 257.

[14] "Respondeo dicendum quod nec in angelo, nec in aliqua creatura, virtus vel potentia operativa est idem quod sua essentia." *S. T.*, I, q. 54, a. 3.

[15] "In Deo autem est idem intellectus, et quod intelligitur, et ipsum intelligere ejus. Unde quidquid est in Deo ut intellectum, est ipsum vivere vel ita ejus. Unde cum omnia quae facta sunt a Deo, sint in ipso ut intellecta, sequitur quod omnia in ipso sunt ipsa vita divina." *S. T.*, I, q. 18, a. 4.

[16] Rousselot, *The Intellectualism of St. Thomas*, Translated by J. E. O'Mahony (London: Sheed & Ward, 1935), p. 31; cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 8; *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 14.

b. Nature of Human Knowledge

Having set human knowledge apart both by reference to what is below it and what is above it, the task now is to examine it more minutely in its own sphere. More exactly, too, since the doctrine of truth is our primary concern, the direction our examination must take is set by St. Thomas' definition of truth as "adequatio rei et intellectus."[17] True knowledge involves a relation implying two terms—reality and mind. And in the light of all that has been so far said of knowledge the conjunction of these two is not a mechanical juxtaposition but a vital process, an "intussusception" as one author calls it.[18]

We have seen already how St. Thomas in contrasting angelic and human knowledge puts man's mind in radical dependence on the outside world.[19] Moreover, it is in the body and through the body to which it is naturally united that the human mind reaches the acquisition of knowledge of this outside world.[20]

A further capital point in the Thomistic theory of knowledge is the immateriality of the mind both as to its nature and its activity. The analysis of the various degrees of knowledge which St. Thomas gives us and the exalted view he achieved of human knowledge demands this. Knowing creatures share in and complement the perfection of the universe. "The soul is in a certain way all things"—the phrase is Aristotle's, but St. Thomas wholeheartedly adopts it.[21] "The most excellent beings are intellectual, since intellect is potentially everything, having within itself as it were, the excellence of everything."[22] By the fact that a being

[17] *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 1.

[18] Rousselot, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

[19] "Tantum se nostra naturalis cognitio extendere potest, in quantum manduci potest, per sensibilia." *S. T.*, I, q. 12, a. 12; cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. 1.

[20] "Sic ergo patet quod propter melius animae est ut corpori uniatur, et intelligat per conversionem ad phantasmata." *S. T.*, I, q. 89, a. 1. "Competit eis ut a corporibus et per corpora suam perfectionem intelligibilem consequantur, alioquin frustra corporibus unirentur." *S. T.*, I, q. 55, a. 2.

[21] *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 1.

[22] "Inter perfectiones autem rerum potissima est quod aliquid sit intellectivum: nam per hoc ipsum est quodammodo omnia, habens in se omnium perfectionem." I *C. G.*, 44. "Naturae autem intellectuales majorem habent

is endowed with intelligence, it is capable of possessing within itself all other being.[23] For St. Thomas such possession is synonymous with immateriality. We have already seen the outline of this in the quotation from the fourth book of the *Contra Gentiles.* There the degrees in the created hierarchy of knowing are dependent on a progressive dematerialization. In another place St. Thomas further explains this.[24] So consistent is St. Thomas in this attitude that he concludes to the supreme intelligence of God because of His absolute immateriality.[25]

Material things, too, the object of our mind, must participate in some degree of immateriality if there is to be the possibility of such knowledge. If we assume a purely material universe, deprived of every intelligible element, it would, by definition, lack transparency to mind. The element of an object which can be assimilated by thought, is precisely its form. To say that the knowing subject becomes the object is consequently the same

affinitatem ad totum quam aliae naturae: nam unaquaeque intellectualis substantia est quodammodo omnia, inquantum totius entis comprehensiva est suo intellectu: quaelibet autem alia substantia particularem solam entis participationem habet. Convenienter igitur alia propter substantias intellectuales providentur a Deo." III *C. G.*, 112.

[23] ". . . cognoscentia a non cognoscentibus in hoc distinguuntur, quia non cognoscentia nihil habent nisi formam suam tantum; sed cognoscens natum est habere formam etiam rei alterius." *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 1.

[24] "Est autem triplex gradus cognoscitivae virtutis. Quaedam enim cognoscitiva virtus est actus organis corporalis, scilicet sensu; et ideo objectum cujuslibet sensitivae potentiae est forma, prout in materia corporali existit. Et quia hujusmodi materia est individuationis principium ideo omnis potentia sensitivae partis est cognoscitiva particularium tantum.—Quaedam autem virtus cognoscitiva est, quae neque est actus organi corporalis, neque est aliquo modo corporali materiae conjuncta, sicut intellectus angelicus; et cujus virtutis cognoscitivae objectum est forma sine materia subsistens. Etsi enim materialia cognoscant, non tamen nisi in immaterialibus ea intuentur, vel in seipsis, vel in Deo.—Intellectus autem humanus medio modo se habet; non enim est actus alicujus organi; sed tamen est quaedam virtus animae, quae est forma corporis. . . . Et ideo proprium ejus est cognoscere formam in materia quidem corporali individualiter existentem, non tamen prout est in tali materia." *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. 1.

[25] "Unde cum Deus sit in summo immaterialitatis sequitur quod ipse sit in summo cognitionis." *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 1.

thing as to say that the form of the knowing subject enriches itself with the form of the object known.[26] Apart from the intellect which can in some way become the thing, there must be, in the thing, some aspect under which it is capable of becoming, in some way, mind.

Here it becomes clear how St. Thomas' theory of knowledge agrees with sensism and idealism while avoiding the excesses of each. Our ideas, agrees St. Thomas with the sensist, are derived from the senses (and therefore from things); but the grossness which would have those ideas not essentially different from images and sensations is avoided. For those ideas are derived by a spiritual faculty and are essentially different from sensation and images. But because those ideas *are* essentially different does not warrant the conclusion that they are not derived from the senses (and by consequence from things) as the idealist would hold. St. Thomas, as a matter of fact, explicitly criticizes Plato for that excess.[27] No, our ideas are *abstracted* from things by the operation of a spiritual faculty.

This leads to the important notion of abstraction. Man is placed in a universe where the intelligible does not occur in a state of purity, and in addition his intellect is such that the intuition of the intelligible is precarious at best. So we can distinguish in the objects of human knowledge a universal and intelligible element associated with a particular and material element. Ab-

[26] "Forma autem in his, quae cognitionem participant, altiori modo invenitur quam in his, quae cognitione carent. In his enim, quae cognitione carent, invenitur tantummodo forma ad unum esse proprium determinans unumquodque, quod etiam naturale uniuscujusque est. . . . In habentibus autem cognitionem sic determinatur unumquodque ad proprium esse naturale, per formam naturalem, quod tamen est receptivum specierum aliarum rerum: sicut sensus recipit species omnium sensibilium, et intellectus omnium intelligibilium. Et sic anima hominis fit omnis quodammodo secundum sensus et intellectum, in quo, quodammodo cognitionem habentia ad Dei similitudinem appropinquant in quo omnia praeexistunt." *S. T.*, I, q. 80, a. 1; cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 7; *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 4.

[27] "Plato vero, attendens solum immaterialitatem intellectus humani, non autem ad hoc quod est corpori quodammodo unitus, posuit objectum intellectus ideas separatas, et quod intelligimus non quidem abstrahendo, sed magis abstracta participando. . . ." *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. 1.

straction, the operation proper to man's mind, consists precisely in separating these two elements, so as to present to the mind the intelligible and universal implicated in the singular.[28]

Man's intelligence, we have seen, is only one of the forms of intelligence, and the lowest one at that. The fact that there are intelligences not united to a body proves that intelligence does not of itself require a body. But human intelligence because it does operate on material things does need one.[29] Withal imperfect[30] the unique operation by which the mind of man safeguards its own operation, while operating in and through the body, is the abstractive process.[31] St. Thomas explains it thus:

> Abstraction may occur in two ways: first, by way of composition and division; and in this way we understand that one thing does not exist in some other, or that it is separated therefrom. Second, by way of simple and absolute consideration, as when we understand one thing without considering another. . . . This is what we mean by abstracting the universal from the particular or the intelligible species from the phantasm; that is, by considering the nature of the species apart from its individual qualities represented by the phantasms.[32]

[28] For the modern attacks on the abstractive process and their refutation see Sheen, *God and Intelligence,* pp. 10 ff., 105 ff.

[29] ". . . corpus requiritur ad actionem intellectus, non sicut organum quo talis actio exerceatur, sed ratione objecti." *S. T.*, I. q. 75, a. 2 ad 3.

[30] "Abstractio accidit intellectuali operationi, et pertinet ad imperfectionem ipsius, ut ex his quae sunt intelligibilia in potentia, scientiam capiat; sicut est de imperfectione visus vespertilionis, quod necesse habeat videre in obscuro." *De Spirit. Creat.,* q. 1, a. 5.

[31] "Cognoscere vero id quod est in materia individuali, non prout est in tali materia, est abstrahere formam a materia individuali, quam repraesentant phantasmata. Et ideo necesse est dicere quod intellectus noster intelligit materialia abstrahendo a phantasmatibus; et per materialia sic considerata in immaterialium aliqualem cognitionem devenimus; sicut e contra angeli per immaterialia materialia cognoscunt." *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. 1.

[32] ". . . abstrahere contingit dupliciter: uno modo per modum compositionis et divisionis, sicut cum intelligimus aliquid non esse in alio, vel esse separatum ab eo. Alio modo per modum simplicitatis; sicut cum intelligimus unum, nihil considerando de alio. . . . Et hoc est abstrahere universale a particulari, vel speciem intelligibilem a phantasmatibus, considerare scilicet naturam speciei absque consideratione individualium principiorum, quae per phantasmata repraesentatur." *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. ad 1; cfr. *De Anima,* a. 5.

Such summarily are some of the key notions of St. Thomas' theory of knowledge. In their framework and by reference to them we can now develop the theory of truth consequent on Aquinas' teaching on the nature of knowledge. The particular distinction of knowledge is that the form of the thing known is in the one knowing. The form is also the pivotal point in our truth theory. It is through the same form that a thing (a) has being; (b) conforms to the divine intellect; (c) causes a true conception in the human intellect.[33] So, for the terms of truth relation we will look to the natural thing, the divine mind and the human mind.

B. Truth

1. *Divisions*

Truth then can be divided into the truth of things, truth of thought about things and, for man, truth in the outward expression of thought about things. Technically, the first kind of truth is called ontological truth, the second logical truth and the third moral truth. Before treating these various divisions in detail we might first lay the foundation for them.

At the very outset of his discussion of truth in the *Summa Theologica* St. Thomas establishes the fact that truth is principally in the intellect, secondarily in things inasmuch as they are ordered to an intellect from which they depend.

> As good exists in a thing so far as that thing is directed to the appetite, and hence the idea of goodness passes on from the desirable thing to the desire itself, so that a desire is called good if its object is good; so, since truth is in the intellect in proportion to its conformity with the object understood, the idea of truth must needs

[33] "Res autem existens extra animam, per formam suam imitatur artem divini intellectus; et per eamdem nata est facere de se veram apprehensionem in intellectu humano, per quam etiam formam unaquaeque res esse habet; unde veritas rerum existentium includit in sui ratione entitatem earum, et superaddit habitudinem adaequationis ad intellectum humanum vel divinum." *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 8.

> flow from the intellect to the object of the intellect, so that the thing understood is said to be true in so far as it is conformed in relation to the intellect. A thing understood may be in relation to intellect either by its own nature or by accident. By its own nature, it is in relation to an intellect on which it depends as regards its own existence; but by accident to one respecting which it is merely a possible object of knowledge.[34]

Again St. Thomas states: ". . . truth properly is in the intellect alone. Things are denominated true from the truth which is in some intellect." [35]

We find the same point much more fully amplified when St. Thomas says:

> A thing is only called true in as much as it is adequated to an intellect; hence truth is found in things secondarily, in the intellect primarily. But it must be noted that the thing is compared to the practical intellect in one way, to the speculative intellect in another way. For the practical intellect causes things, and so is the measure of things which are made by it; but the speculative intellect, because it receives from things, is in a certain way moved by things themselves; so things measure it. It is evident, then, that natural things, from which our mind receives its knowledge, measure our mind; but they are measured by the divine mind, in which are all created things, just as all artificial works are in the mind of their maker. Therefore the divine mind is that measuring, but not measured; the natural thing, however, is that measuring and that measured; our mind is that measured, not, indeed, measuring natural things, but artificial ones only. So the natural thing constituted between two intellects,

[34] "Sicut autem bonum est in re, inquantum habet ordinem ad appetitum; et propter hoc ratio bonitatis derivatur a re appetibili in appetitum, secundum quod appetitus dicitur bonus, prout est boni, ita, cum verum sit intellectu, secundum quod conformatur rei intellectae, necesse est quod ratio veri ab intellectu ad rem intellectam derivetur; ut res intellecta vera dicatur, secundum quod habet aliquem ordinem ad intellectum.—Res autem intellecta ad intellectum aliquem potest habere ordinem vel per se, vel per accidens. Per se quidem habet ordinem ad intellectum a quo dependet secundum suum esse. Per accidens autem ad intellectum a quo cognoscibilis est." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 1.

[35] ". . . veritas proprie est in solo intellectu. Res dicuntur verae a veritate quae est in aliquo intellectu." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 8.

> is called true, according as there is an adequation to both; for it is called true according to an adequation to the divine mind, in as much as it fulfills that to which it is ordered by the divine mind. . . . However in adequation to the human mind a thing is called true in as much as it is designed to form of itself a true realization. . . . The first reason of truth is present in the thing before the second: for comparison to the divine mind is prior to comparison to the human mind; so, even if there were no human mind, still things would be called true by relation to the divine mind. And, if both minds could be conceived as non-existent, which is impossible, absolutely no reason of truth would remain.[36]

The above citation gives full weight to the universally accepted definition of truth: *veritas est adaequatio rei et intellectus*. Note, though, the shift of viewpoint. For, as previously quoted, "the natural thing, constituted between two intellects, is called true according to an adequation to both. . . ." [37] This demands a

[36] "Res autem non dicitur vera nisi secundum quod est intellectui adaequata; unde per posterius invenitur verum in rebus, per prius autem in intellectu. Sed sciendum quod res aliter comparatur ad intellectum practicum, aliter ad speculativum. Intellectus enim practicus causat res, unde est mensuratio rerum quae per ipsum fiant; sed intellectus speculativus, quia accipit a rebus, est quodammodo motus ab ipsis rebus; et ita res mensurant ipsum. Ex quod patet quod res naturales, ex quibus intellectus noster scientiam accipit, mensurant intellectum nostrum . . . sed sunt mensuratae ab intellectu divino; in quo sunt omnia creata, sicut omnia artificiata in intellectu artificis. Sic ergo intellectus divinus est mensurans, non mensuratus: res autem naturalis, mensurans et mensurata; sed intellectus noster est mensuratus, non mensurans quidem res naturales, sed artificiales tantum. Res ergo naturalis inter duos intellectus constituta, secundum adaequationem ad utrumque vera dicitur; secundum enim adaequationem ad intellectum divinum dicitur vera, in quantum implet hoc ad quod est ordinata per intellectum divinum. . . . Secundum autem adaequationem ad intellectum humanum dicitur res vera, inquantum nata est de se formare veram aestimationem. . . . Prima autem ratio veritatis per prius inest rei quam secunda: quia prior est comparatio ad intellectum divinum quam humanum; unde, etiam si intellectus humanus non esset, adhuc res dicerentur verae in ordine ad intellectum divinum. *Sed, si uterque intellectus, quod est impossibile, intellegeretur, auferri, nullo modo veritatis ratio remaneret.*" *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 2; cfr. *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 4. Italics added.

[37] "Res ergo naturalis inter duos intellectus constituta, secundum adaequationem ad utrumque vera dicitur." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 4.

modification of the general definition. In the case of truth in the divine mind that modification would be *adaequatio rei cum intellectu;* in the consideration of truth in the human mind it would be *adaequatio intellectus cum re.* The first, ontological truth, lies in the relation of conformity of reality to mental type; the second, logical truth, lies in the relation of conformity of human mind to reality. By a rather crude analogy, if we could imagine a dictaphone as having its whole *raison d'être* from the message it receives, then we might liken it to some natural thing, to which the divine mind gives the message, and from which we receive that message.[38]

Moral truth is simply truth in the outward expression of our thought about things. The function of words and sentences is but to signify and to convey to others the thoughts of the mind; hence "words receive the predication of truth in the very same way as the intellect which they signify."[39] Because man is a social being, moral truth is vitally important in the acquisition and diffusion of truth. Speech is most exacting as a point of contact with others; the utmost concern as to the conformity of words with thought is demanded in the interest of truth. Man can choose his words: by those things he says or does he can give rise to a true or false estimation of himself or others.[40]

The question might arise about man-made creations. The key

[38] Cfr. *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 4. "Veritas autem quae dicitur de rebus in comparatione ad intellectum humanum, est rebus quodammodo accidentalis; quia posito quod intellectus humanus non esset, nec esse possit, adhuc res in sua essentia permanerent. Sed veritas quae dicitur de eis in comparatione ad intellectum divinum, eis inseparabiliter communicatur; non enim subsistere possunt nisi per intellectum divinum eas in esse producentem. Per prius etiam inest rei veritas per comparationem ad intellectum divinum quam humanum; cum ad intellectum divinum comparatur quasi ad causam, ad humanum autem quodammodo quasi ad effectum, inquantum intellectus a rebus scientiam accipit."

[39] "Voces autem eodem modo recipiunt veritatis praedicationem sicut intellectus quos significant." *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 3. ". . . veritatis actionis sub veritate rei comprehenditur, ut veritas enuntiationis sub veritate intellectus quam significat." *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 6.

[40] ". . . quae est electivus orationum suarum, verarum vel falsarum, vel qui facit aestimationem de se vel de aliis veram vel falsam per ea quae dicit vel facit." *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 3.

to the solution of that problem is found in a previous quotation from St. Thomas.[41] The creations of man are measured by his intellect; but his works are not *res naturales,* they are artificial. The natural—that which is conformed to the divine mind, has its very being from that mind—limits, confines and restrains them. So true is this that the further any effort of man gets away from the ontological truth of things, the more unreal, artificial in the odious sense of the word, it becomes. Thus, even what seem to be the independent products of man are traceable ultimately to the one normative truth.

2. *Classifications*

The delineation of truth into ontological, logical and moral, serves the cause of exact study. But truth in action bursts these bonds and is coextensive with the whole of man's activity. Thus it is that we find St. Thomas dividing truth into the broad classifications of truth of life, truth of justice and truth of doctrine. The truth of life is so-called inasmuch as man fulfills in his life that to which he is ordered by the divine intellect.[42] In the words of St. Thomas:

> . . . the truth of life is truth according to which anything is true, and not the truth according as anyone speaks the truth. A life, just as anything else, is called true inasmuch as it attains its rule and measure, namely, the divine law, in conformity with which it has rectitude.[43]

By contrast, while the truth of life is personal, the truth of justice,

[41] ". . . intellectus noster est mensuratus, non mensurans quidem res naturales, sed artificiales tantum." *De Ver.,* q. 1, a. 4.

[42] "Veritas vitae dicitur particulariter, secundum quod homo in vita sua implet illud ad quod ordinatur per intellectum divinum." *S. T.,* I, q. 16, a. 1 ad 3.

[43] ". . . veritas vitae est veritas secundum quam aliquid est verum, non veritas secundum quam aliquis dicit verum. Dicitur autem vita vera, sicut et qualibet alia res, ex hoc quod attingit suam regulam et mensuram, scilicet divinam legem, percujus conformitatem rectitudinem habet." *S. T.,* II–IIae, q. 109, a. 2 ad 3. Cfr. *S. T.,* I, q. 16, a. 1.

on the other hand, has for its concern others; it invokes obedience to what is due another.[44]

To translate *veritas doctrinae,* the third broad division, as truth of doctrine, does not do justice to its full import. In the Latin *doctrina* imports the teaching or instruction of a master to his pupils; such a notion gives more weight to the idea of the truth of doctrine as "the truth by which anyone by word and deed makes manifest what he knows." [45]

These general divisions are significant in the light of the endeavor of this work to show the social rôle of truth. Far from being a matter of academic debate, truth and its acquisition lie across the whole of personal and social life. While this is not yet the place to develop at length the rôle of truth in social life, certainly the foregoing exposition suggests any number of pertinent questions. For example, take the division of ontological truth. From that alone stem the questions: Does it make any difference to both the individual and society whether or not he has a *true* idea of himself? of his fellow men? Is it not profoundly important for society and its members that the concept of duty and obligation stem from the truth about man, his destiny, his make-up, his position in the universe? To answer these questions would be impossible within the limits of this work. Some of the clear rays of the sun of truth we can hope to focus, though, and thus indicate what truth means in man's social life. But of this, more later.

3. *Characteristics*

To further amplify this study let us turn for a moment to some of the common characteristics of truth. We might preface this section by saying that "the deep vein of Agnosticism as to the

[44] "Veritas autem justitiae dicitur dupliciter: uno modo secundum quod ipsa justitia est rectitudo quaedam regulata secundum regulam divinae legis; et secundum hoc differt veritas justitiae a veritate vitae, quia veritas vitae est secundum quam aliquis recte vivit in seipso, veritas autem justitiae est secundum quam aliquis rectitudinem legis in judicium, quae sunt ad alterum servat." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 3 ad 3.

[45] ". . . veritas quae quid manifestat verbo vel facto quod cognoscit." *Ibidem.*

nature of ultimate reality, and of Scepticism as to the constructive power of reason" [46] has no place in the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas. As a matter of fact the robust confidence of the attainability of truth is not the least of the contributions that philosophy can make to social life. The author quoted above bemoans the fact that "the buoyant thought of the Greeks, their constructive reasoning, their daring speculation is no longer ours." He goes on to say: "In so many of the modern codes, reason seems crippled and bent if not broken. . . ." [47] There we depart from him. Falsity there can be and is, yes. But while its presence unmans so many modern philosophers, the followers of St. Thomas Aquinas are prepared to grapple with error precisely because of their view of truth.

And this leads us to our first generalization about truth. It might be considered a view by contrast. Cousin had a point of contact with Scholastic thought when he wrote: "La pure erreur serait impossible, et elle serait inentelligible; comme l'erreur ne penetre dans l'esprit d'un homme que par le côte de verité qui est en elle." [48] Falsity, like other evils, is a privation of good. "As the good is in relation to things, so is the true in relation to knowledge. Nothing can be found among things which is entirely lacking in goodness. Whence, too, there is no knowledge which is totally false, without the admixture of some truth." [49] Falsity will be discussed more at length later; suffice it here to point out the utter impossibility of complete error. So true is this that falsehood is dangerous only from its possessing a certain portion of mutilated truth.[50] Falsity is weak, lame and halting; truth on the other hand is so strong and vigorous it demands recognition.

[46] Vance, J. G., *Reality and Truth* (London: Longmans, Green, 1919), p. 246.

[47] *Ibid,* p. 246.

[48] *Cours de philosophie* (Bruxelles: Soc. Belge de Librarie, 1840), Vol. II, p. 369.

[49] ". . . sicut se habet bonum in rebus, ita verum in cognitione. Impossibile est autem inveniri aliquid in rebus quod totaliter bono privetur. Unde etiam impossibile est esse aliquam cognitionem quae sit falsa, absque admixtione alicujus veritatis." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 172, a. 6.

[50] "Falsiter autem non solum est carentia veritatis, sed etiam ipsius corruptio." *De Ver.*, q. 18, a. 6.

This leads to another characteristic of truth—its intrinsic appeal. The quiet of mind which is the characteristic mark of genuine certitude is never complete when one adheres staunchly to an erroneous statement. The false—that which is not—cannot manifest itself as real and true. Such manifestation is reserved to reality—to that which is—to the true.[51] "To apprehend truth," says St. Thomas, "is in itself attractive to anyone."[52] Only for selfish reasons is it denied.[53]

In this light the Greek adjective meaning true, ἀληθῆς, is significant. It is formed from the alpha privative and the stem λαθ which connotes hiding or something hidden. Thus in its final form it has the notion of not hidden, evident, appealing.

That truth does have this appeal is due to the fact it stems from one unchangeable Truth. "Either truth, namely of the intellect and of the thing is reduced, as into a first principle, to God Himself: because His being is the cause of all being, and His understanding is the cause of all knowledge."[54]

In this connection we might note the amplification of this statement of St. Thomas. The reason of truth, he holds, consists in two things—the real being of anything and the apprehension of the cognitive faculty proportional to the being of the thing. Either of these is traced back to God as our efficient and exemplary cause. Things are true and the mind discovers truth. But, though there are as many truths as there are created beings, these are all grounded in the one divine Being, the efficient and exemplary cause of all things.[55]

[51] Cfr. Rother, A., *Certitude* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1911), p. 33.

[52] ". . . intelligere veritatem cuilibet est secundum se amabile." *S. T.*, II-IIae, q. 15, a. 1 ad 3.

[53] Cfr. *ibidem*.

[54] "Utraque autem veritas, scilicet intellectus et rei, reducitur sicut in primum principium, in ipsum Deum; quia suum esse, est causa omnis esse, et suum intelligere est causa omnis cognitionis." I *Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1, corpus.

[55] ". . . ratio veritatis in duobus consistit: in esse rei, et in apprehensione virtutis cognoscitivae proportionata ad esse rei. Utrumque autem horum quamvis, ut dictum est, reducatur in Deum sicut in causam efficientem et exemplarem; nihilominus tamen quaelibet res participat suum esse creatum, quo formaliter est, et unusquisque intellectus participat lumen per quod recte de re judicat, quod quidem est exemplatum a lumine increato. Habet etiam intellectus suam operationem in se, ex qua completur ratio veritatis. Unde dico, quod sicut est unum esse divinum quo omnia sunt, sicut a principio effectivo exemplari; nihilominus sunt plures veritates in rebus creatis, quibus dicuntur verae formaliter." I *Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2.

If we wish further to amplify the mind of St. Thomas in tracing all truth back to a First Truth, there are many expressions of this to choose from. Thus, in speaking of the truth of things, he says:

> If, indeed, we speak of truth inasmuch as it is in things; thus all are true by one first truth, to which each is likened according to its entity. And so, although there are many essences or forms of things, there is, nevertheless, one truth of the divine intellect, according to which all things are called true.[56]

So, too, as regards the mind, "the soul does not judge of all things according to any truth; but according to the first truth, inasmuch as this results in her, as in a mirror, according to the first intelligibles."[57]

True, there are as many particular truths as there are entities in this world and beyond it.[58] And, in a real sense too, we can say that one thing is truer than another.[59] This, however, is far from being a source of confusion; they all lead back to one first

[56] "Si vero loquamur, de veritate secundum quod est in rebus; sic omnes sunt verae, una prima veritate, cui unumquodque assimilatur secundum suam entitatem. Et sic, licet, plures sint essentiae vel formae rerum, tamen una est veritas divini intellectus, secundum quam omnes res renominantur verae." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 6.

[57] ". . . anima non secundum quamcumque veritatem judicat de rebus omnibus; sed secundum veritatem primam, inquantum resultat in ea sicut in speculo, secundum prima intelligibilia." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 6 ad 1.

[58] "Veritates autem quae sunt in rebus, sunt plures, sicut et rerum entitates." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 4.

[59] "Cum autem veritas constet in adaequatione intellectus et rei, si consideretur veritas secundum rationem aequalitatis, quae non recipit magis et minus, sic non contingit esse aliquid magis et minus verum; sed si consideretur ipsum esse rei, quod est ratio veritatis, eadem est dispositio rerum in esse et veritate; unde quae sunt magis entia, sunt magis vera." *Q. D. De Caritate*, q. 1, a. 9 ad 1.

truth in which they find unity and in which our mind, apprehending them truly and tracing their origin, finds satisfaction.[60]

Before closing this chapter, let us review what has been so far said. Suppose then the capability of the human mind to know things as they are in themselves and the validity of principles it employs, both of which can be and are demonstrated. Moreover, suppose the existence of God as demonstrated by natural theology. By so doing we shall be enabled to view the whole system of truth as it is developed by St. Thomas.

God the Necessary Being who exists from all eternity and possesses an infinite mind, knows Himself in an infinite degree—that is to say, as far as He is knowable. His knowledge extends not only to what He is in Himself, but also in so far as He is imitable —though imperfectly—by the finite beings which He has power to create. Everything that He freely creates must be fashioned on the model of these divine ideas, as a work of art is fashioned after the ideal the artist forms of his work before he makes it. It follows that all created things correspond with the eternal idea God formed of their nature. This adequate correspondence is their truth; it is essential to them and is immutable. The truth resulting from human knowledge is only a reflection of the truth manifested by God in His works.

Taking this higher view of the order of the universe we may say that truth resides, in the first place, in the Divine Intelligence which eternally conceives the idea of His works. It belongs, in the second place, to things in so far as they are realized in conformity with their eternal archetypal ideas. And finally, it passes from things into human knowledge as soon as the mind represents to itself things as they are.

Further, because truth is coextensive with reality it is entwined by its presence in all man's thoughts, words and actions. So we

[60] ". . . verum intellectus nostri est secundum quod conformatur suo principio; scilicet intellectui divino. Veritas etiam rerum est, secundum quod conformantur suo principio, scilicet intellectui divino." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 5 ad 2. ". . . et sic denominantur omnes res verae a prima veritate. Et quia veritas quae est in tellectu, mensuratur a rebus ipsis, sequitur non solum veritas rei, sed etiam veritas intellectus, vel enuntiationis, quae intellectum significat, a veritate prima denominetur." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 5.

find the Angelic Doctor speaking of the truth of life, the truth of justice, the truth of doctrine.

4. *Social Application*

Particularly then, how does the truth as St. Thomas traces it affect social life? Though the division *veritas vitae* contains in itself all virtue[61] truth is more specifically applicable in life relations when it is considered as a virtue properly so-called. In so considering it the Angelic Doctor first distinguishes between the truth by which anything is denominated true and the truth as anyone speaks it. In this last sense it is that truth is a virtue—and with serious social implications.

> . . . that which makes a work of man good pertains to the reason of human virtue. Whence, where a special reason of good is found in a human act, it must needs be that man is so disposed through a special virtue. Moreover since good, according to Augustine, consists in order, the special reason of the good must be considered from a determined order.
>
> There is indeed a certain special order according to which our exterior acts, words or deeds are duly ordered to something, just as a sign to the thing signified; and man is perfected in this through the virtue of truth. Whence it is manifest that truth is a special virtue.[62]

A response to an objection in the same question reveals clearly

[61] ". . . veritas vitae est veritas secundum quam aliquid est verum, non veritas secundum quam aliquis dicit verum. Dicitur autem vita vera, sicut et quaelibet alia res, ex hoc quod attingit suam regulam et mensuram, scilicet divinam legem, per cujus conformitatem rectitudinem habet: et talis veritas, sive rectitudo, communis est ad quamlibet virtutem." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 2 ad 3.

[62] ". . . ad rationem virtutis humanae pertinet quod opus hominis bonum reddat. Unde ubi in actu hominis invenitur specialis ratio bonitatis, necesse est quod ad hoc disponatur homo per specialem virtutem. Cum autem bonum, secundum Augustinum, consistat in ordine, necesse est specialem rationem boni considerari ex determinato ordine. Est autem quidam specialis ordo secundum quod exteriora nostra vel verba, vel facta debite ordinantur ad aliquid sicut signum ad signatum; et ad hoc perficitur homo per virtutem veritatis. Unde manifestum est quod veritas est specialis virtus." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 2. Cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 4 ad 3.

the social implications of this virtue. There truth and simplicity are considered the same virtue differing only in reason.[63] Thus the virtue of truth rules out the deception and pretense so harmful to social relations. For this reason truth takes on the aspect of something strictly demanded of man as a social being.[64] Here then is a fruitful view of truth in social intercourse which we hope to emphasize and apply more particularly in the last part of this dissertation.

One further fact we desire to point out—the connection of truth and justice, this latter eminently a social virtue.

> Moreover, the virtue of truth agrees with justice indeed in two ways: one way in fact in this that it is to another; for manifestation which we call an act of the will is to another, inasmuch namely as one man manifests to another those things which concern himself; in another manner, in as much as justice establishes a certain equality in things; and the virtue of truth does this too: for it adequates signs to existing things concerning itself. However, it fails in the proper reason of justice from the viewpoint of something due: for this virtue does not consider legal debt with which justice concerns itself, but rather moral debt, in as much as one man owes the manifestation of truth to another from honesty. Whence truth is a part of justice, so that it is annexed to it as a secondary virtue to a principal one.[65]

[63] ". . . simplicitas dicitur per oppositum duplicitate, qua scilicet aliquis aliud habet in corde, et aliud ostendit exterius, et sic simplicitas ad hanc virtutem pertinet. Facit autem intentionem rectam, non quidem directe (quia hoc pertinet ad omnem virtutem), sed excludendo duplicitatem, qua homo unum praetendit et aliud intendit." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 2 ad 4.

[64] *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 3 ad 1; *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 114, a. 2 ad 1.

[65] "Virtus autem veritatis convenit quidem cum justitia in duobus: uno quidem modo in hoc quod est ad alterum; manifestatio enim, quam diximus esse actum voluntatis, est ad alterum, inquantum scilicet ea quae circa ipsum sunt unus homo alteri manifestat; alio modo, inquantum justitia aequalitatem quamdam in rebus constituit: et hoc etiam facit virtus veritatis: adaequat enim signa rebus existentibus circa ipsum. Deficit autem a propria ratione justitiae quantum ad rationem debiti: non enim haec virtus tendit debitum legale, quod attendit justitia, sed potius debitum morale, inquantum scilicet ex honestate unus homo alteri debet veritatis manifestationem. Unde veritas est pars justitiae, inquantum annectitur ei sicut virtus secundaria principali." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 3.

So close are justice and truth that the Angelic Doctor gives an affirmative answer to the question whether the justice of God is truth.[66] While admitting justice is an act of the will he emphasizes the rôle of the mind in the same virtue.[67]

An American thinker has said: "Truth is the summit of being: justice is the application of it to affairs. . . . A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as a magnet arranges itself with the pole."[68] As a matter of fact truth overlays all virtue;[69] but any further development would take us beyond the scope of this work. So we propose to confine ourselves to the two social aspects of the virtue of truth itself and the rôle of truth in justice outlined above; by using just these as pivotal points more than enough phases of development should be furnished.

C. Falsity

1. *Cognitive Aspects*

Before going on to the detailed application of truth in social life, the problem of untruth or falsity demands consideration. The shadows as well as the light must be delimited if we are to have a full and rounded appreciation.

The best approach to untruth is the simple question: what is falsity? This we can best answer by an inquiry into its origin. Doing that involves examination of the senses, external objects (*res*) and the mind itself as sources of falsity.

"Simply speaking," says St. Thomas, "everything is true and nothing is false: but relatively, namely by relation to our intellect some things are called false."[70] Recalling what has been said about truth as an adequation the Angelic Doctor thus explains: in comparison to the divine intellect nothing is false, but in com-

[66] *S. T.*, I, q. 21, a. 2.

[67] ". . . justitia, quantum ad legem regulantem, est in ratione." *S. T.*, I, q. 21, a. 2 ad 1.

[68] Emerson, Ralph Waldo, *Essay on Character.*

[69] Cfr. above, p. 22 no. 61.

[70] ". . . simpliciter loquendo omnis res est vera, et nulla res est falsa; sed secundum quid scilicet in ordine ad intellectum nostrum, aliquae res dicuntur falsae." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 10.

parison to our intellect there can sometimes be falsity.[71] The question is—how?

That brings us to the senses. The introduction of these faculties needs accurate explanation. This we must emphasize:

> Truth belongs to the mind and is known by the mind, because it reflects upon its act: and this reflection consists not merely in the knowledge of its act, but in the knowledge of its conformity with the real. Now this cannot happen unless the very nature of its act be known: and this again cannot be unless the very nature of the principle at work be known, which is the intellect itself, whose nature it is to conform to the real. Therefore, it is insofar as the intellect reflects upon itself that it realizes its truth.[72]

The senses of themselves do not know truth or falsity, though they do know the true or the false.[73] Furthermore our knowledge, which has its origin in external things, begins in sense and is perfected in the intellect; in a qualified manner sense can be considered the medium between the mind and the external world.[74]

[71] "Patet ergo quod res quantumqumque se habeat sub quacumque forma existens, vel privatione vel defectu, intellectui divino adaequantur . . . per comparationem ad intellectum humanum invenitur interdum inaequalitas rei ad intellectum . . ." *Ibidem.*

[72] ". . . veritas . . . in intellectu enim est sicut consequens actum intellectus, et sicut cognita per intellectum; consequitur namque intellectus operationem secundum quod judicium intellectus est de re secundum quod est; cognoscitur autem ab intellectu secundum quod intellectus reflectitur supra actum suum, non solum secundum quod cognoscit actum suum, sed secundum quod cognoscit proportionem ejus ad rem, quod quidem cognosci non potest nisi cognoscatur natura principii activi, quod est ipse intellectus, in cujus natura est ut rebus conformetur; unde secundum hoc cognoscit veritatem intellectus quod supra se ipsum reflectitur." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 10.

[73] "Veritas autem non sic est in sensu, ut sensus cognoscat veritatem; sed inquantum veram apprehensionem habet de sensibilibus, . . . Quod quidem contingit ex hoc quod apprehendit res ut sunt. Unde contingit falsitatem esse in sensu ex hoc quod apprehendit vel judicat res aliter quam sint." *S. T.*, I, q. 17, a. 2; *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 9.

[74] ". . . cognitio nostra quae a rebus initium sumit, hoc ordine progreditur, ut primo incipiat in sensu, secundo perficiatur in intellectu; ut sic sensus inveniatur quodammodo medius inter intellectum et res: est enim, rebus comparatus, quasi intellectus; et intellectui comparatus, quasi res quaedam. . . ." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 2.

With all this clearly in mind we can see how the senses are responsible for falsity. We have at hand an accurate and detailed analysis of this problem by St. Thomas: technically he distinguishes between *sensibile per se* comprising the proper object of each sense and the *common sensibiles,* [75] and the *sensibile per accidens* which is the substratum—for example, substance—inevitably associated with the sensible qualifies affecting our external organs of perception. Only accidentally can the senses be deceived as far as their proper objects go; the same senses can, however, be deceived in the *common sensibile* and the *sensibile per accidens.*[76] As an example of mistake by a sense of its proper object St. Thomas alleges the case of a sick person whose sense of taste has been affected and for whom even sweets have lost their appeal. A mistake in a *common sensibile* would be that of the enthusiastic hiker who sadly miscalculates the distance from one hill to another. Those scientists who tend to identify the ultimate reality of nature with those quantitative relations that are susceptible of mathematical treatment are deceived in the *sensibile per accidens.* It is evident how these mistakes affect judgment: the sick person decides a dish designed to tempt him is sour to the taste; the hiker underestimates the energy that will be demanded

[75] "Besides the special sensible qualities which constitute the proper object of each of the external senses there are also 'common sensibiles' or qualities which affect many or all of the senses at once. Of these Aristotle enumerates five, namely, 'movement, repose, measure, form or shape, and size." Mercier, *A Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1932), Vol. I, p. 194.

[76] "Similitudo autem alicujus rei est in sensu tripliciter; Uno modo, primo et per se; sicut in visu est similitudo colorum, et aliorum propriorum sensibilium. Alio modo per se, sed non primo; sicut in visu est similitudo figurae, vel magnitudinis, et aliorum communium sensibilium. Tertio modo, nec primo, nec, per se sed per accidens; sicut in visu est similitudo hominis, non inquantum est homo, sed inquantum huic colorato accidit esse hominem. Et ideo circa propria sensibilia sensus non habet falsam cognitionem, nisi per accidens, et in paucioribus. . . . De sensibilibus vero communibus et per accidens potest esse falsum judicium etiam in sensu recte dispositio; quia sensus non directe refertur ad illa, sed per accidens, vel ex consequenti, inquantum refertur ad alia." *S. T.*, I, q. 17, a. 2.

of him; the scientist ridicules the substance of the scholastics. In this way it is that there is falsity in the senses.

Now as to external things being false, that too needs to be qualified. By its appearances we may be deceived in our judgment about something—false gold is the example St. Thomas uses. But this does not mean that such an external object is *necessarily* the cause of falsity; truth and falsity principally exist in the judgment of the soul.[77] Recall what we have previously quoted from St. Thomas: "Truth belongs to the mind and is known by the mind because it reflects upon its act." With these qualifications we can say there is falsity in external objects when "nata sunt videri aut qualia non sunt, aut quae non sunt," as St. Thomas says.

Thus we come to falsity in the mind. In handling this problem St. Thomas first distinguishes the twofold operation of the intellect by which it apprehends the *quiddity*[78] and then proceeds by composition and division.[79] This last would seem to do violence to the real unity of beings outside ourselves. But there is no

[77] ". . . illa dicuntur falsa quae nata sunt videri aut qualia non sunt, aut quae non sunt; ut aurum falsum in quo exterius apparet color auri, et alia hujusmodi accidentia, cum tamen interius natura auri non subsit. Nec tamen res est hoc modo causa falsitatis in anima, quod necessaria falsitatem causet; quia veritas et falsitas praecipue in judicio animae existunt, anima vero inquantum de rebus judicat, non patitur a rebus, sed magis quodammodo agit." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 10.

[78] "It is frequently said that the proper object of the intellect is the 'essence' or 'nature' of material things. Such expressions are not felicitous, as they might lead one to think that we have an immediate knowledge of the specific essences of things. . . . To a full idea of a species the mind must proceed from some less determined, and therefore simpler, notions of genera and even of accidents. In order to avoid such a misunderstanding and to imply that the mind's notion of things is at first only the most simple and general, it is better to adopt two Scholastic words and call the object of the intellect the *quiddity* or *inner reason* of a thing. The word *quiddity* signifies in a very general way *what-a-thing-is;* it answers the question: 'What sort of a being is this? quid est?'" Mercier, *A Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy*, Vol. I, p. 241.

[79] ". . . metaphysical composition . . . presupposes some sort of foundation in the object itself; such composition is the outcome of the mind's relative incapacity when confronted with the wealth of attributes that are included in the connotation of any object." Mercier, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 450.

difficulty here if we remember that the mind attains reality, as it were, piecemeal.[80]

And so because the first of the above operations contemplates the *quiddity* of the thing and the second turns its attention to its being, and further, since the reason of truth is founded on the being and not on the *quiddity*, truth and falsity are properly found in the second operation, in the first only by accident.[81] How this happens St. Thomas thus explains:

> In affirming and denying, the intellect may be deceived, by attributing, for instance, to the thing of which it understands the quiddity, something which is only consequent upon it, or is opposed to it. The intellect is in the same position as regards judging of such things, as sense is as to judging of common, or accidental, sensible objects. There is, however, this difference, as before mentioned regarding truth, that falsity can exist in the intellect not only because the knowledge of the intellect is false, but because the intellect is conscious of that knowledge, as it is conscious of truth; whereas in sense falsity does not exist as known. But because falsity of the intellect is concerned essentially with the composition of the intellect alone, falsity occurs accidentally in the operation of the intellect knowing the essence of a thing

[80] "Things, however, do not present themselves to the mind with that simplicity which would exclude all questioning and ulterior research. On the contrary, reality reveals itself with an almost embarrassing variety and complexity. To be able to judge and pronounce conclusively, the mind must first unravel this complexity. The proper task of the mind is to discriminate, separate, classify, and recombine. In this task no element of reality may be disregarded or suppressed. It is here that the critical problem begins and that immediate realism starts to differentiate itself from naive realism." Bandas, *Contemporary Philosophy and Thomistic Principles* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1932), pp. 176–177.

[81] ". . . duplex operatio intellectus: una quarum dicitur a quibusdam imaginatio intellectus . . . quae consistit in apprehensione quidditatis simplicis, quae alio etiam nomine formatio dicitur; alia est quam dicunt fidem, quae consistit in compositione vel divisione propositionis; prima operatio respicit quidditatem rei; secunda respicit esse ipsius. Et quia ratio veritatis fundatur in esse, et non in quidditate, ut dictum est, ideo veritas et falsitas proprie invenitur in secunda operatione, et in signo ejus quod est enuntiatio, et non in prima, vel signo ejus quod est definitio, nisi secundum quid . . ." I *Sent.* q. 19, a. 5 ad 7.

> by composition being mixed up in it. This can take place in two ways. In one way, by the intellect applying to one thing the definition proper to another; as that of a circle to a man. Wherefore the definition of one thing is false of another. In another way, by including in one definition terms which are mutually exclusive. For thus the definition is not only false of the thing, but false in itself.[82]

Thus the Angelic Doctor details the contributory factors and the fundamental sources of falsehood and untruth—the attribution by the mind to something apprehended correctly of that which is not consequent upon it or is opposed to it, and the attribution of the definition of one thing to another as well as the association in a definition of parts which cannot be combined. Worthy of note before closing this discussion is the fact that, while St. Thomas is aware of error in our mind and acutely analyzes it, just the same he considers such error in intellectual knowledge, in a certain sense, abnormal, occurring in us because of the relative imperfection of our knowing faculty.[83]

[82] ". . . in componendo vero vel dividendo potest decipi; dum attribuit rei, cujus quidditatem intelligit, aliquid quod eam non consequitur, vel quod ei opponitur. Sic enim se habet intellectus ad judicandum de hujusmodi, sicut sensus ad judicandum de sensibilibus communibus, vel peraccidens. Hac tamen differentia servata, quod falsitas in intellectu esse potest, non solum quia cognitio intellectus falsa est, sed quia intellectus eam cognoscit, sicut et veritatem; in sensu autem falsitas non est ut cognita, ut dictum est. Quia vero falsitas intellectus per se solum circa compositionem intellectus est, per accidens etiam in operatione intellectus, qua cognoscit quod quid est, potest esse falsitas, inquantum ibi compositio intellectus admiscetur. Quod potest esse dupliciter. Uno modo, secundum quod intellectus definitionem unius attribuit alteri; ut si definitionem circuli attribuat homini. Unde definitio unius rei est falsa de altera. Alio modo, secundum quod partes definitionis componit ad invicem, quae simul sociari non possunt. Sic enim definitio non est solum falsa respectu alicujus rei, sed est falsa in se." *S. T.*, I, q. 17, a. 3.

[83] ". . . ratio enim nihil aliud est nisi natura intellectualis obumbrata. . . ." I *Sent.*, Dist. 3, a. 4 ad 4. Cfr. *C. G.*, Bk. 3, c. 108. "Proprium autem objectum intellectus est quidditas rei. In cognitione igitur intellectus deceptio accidere non potest, si pluras rerum quidditates apprehendat, sed omnis deceptio intellectus accidere videtur ex hoc quod apprehendit formas rerum permixtas phantasmatibus, ut in nobis accidit. Talis autem modus cognoscendi non est in substantiis intellectualibus corpori non unitis. . . ."

2. *Volitional Aspects*

So far we have confined ourselves to the cognitive factors in error, but there is one final point—the influence of will as a contributing element—which we would do well to consider. Here St. Thomas' teaching on assent furnishes the clue. Though that doctrine of assent is studied in another context—in relation to belief—it gives us a valuable treatment for our concern with error and its causes.

Belief—St. Thomas tells us—is not found in the first operation of the mind (simple apprehension), but in judgment, for the object of belief is the true or mistakenly the false. Further, the mind can be determined to assent in either of two ways: (1) by its own proper object, which is the intelligible form of the thing known; or (2) by the will. Its determination in the first case is either immediate (in understanding the first principles), or mediate (in deducing consequences by way of demonstration). In the second case "the intellect is determined through the will which deliberately and positively chooses to assent to one part because of a motive sufficient to move the will, though not sufficient to move the intellect." [84]

Nothing is said above about erroneous judgment. Significantly, though, in another place St. Thomas defines error as: *praecisus assensus ad id quod est falsum.*[85] Moreover, he frequently implies

[84] "Patet ergo ex dictis, quod in illa operatione intellectus qua format simplices rerum quidditates, non invenitur assensus, cum non sit ibi verum vel falsum. . . . Intelligens autem habet quidem assensum, quia certissime alteri parti inhaeret; non habet autem cogitationem, quia sine aliqua collatione determinatur ad unam. Sciens vero habet et cogitationem, et assensum; sed cogitationem causantem assensum, et assensum terminantem cogitationem. . . . Sed in fide est assensus et cogitatio quasi ex aequo. Non enim assensus ex cogitatione causatur, sed ex voluntate, ut dictum est. . . . Quandoque vero intellectus non potest determinari ad alterum partem contradictionis neque statim per ipsas definitiones terminorum, sicut in principiis, nec etiam virtute principiorum, sicut in conclusionibus demonstrativis est; determinatur autem per voluntatem, quae eligit assentire uni parti determinate et praecise propter aliquod quod est sufficiens ad movendum voluntatem, non autem ad movendum intellectum. . . ." *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 1; cfr. *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 2, a. 1.

[85] *De Ver.*, q. 18, a. 6.

that every full-fledged mistake involves an influence of free will.[86] Error, then, would be an assent given under the influence of the will to the reality of something we do not know.

All this is consistent with St. Thomas' notion of the nature of assent. For him assent is an act of the intellect that may be imposed by the will.[87] As such it is a constituent of all judgment[88] and something more than apprehending or understanding.[89] It connotes activity; it is the act by which through the apprehension of a subject-predicate relation between mental terms, we affirm or deny a corresponding state of affairs in the real.[90] Though not

[86] ". . . error manifeste habet rationem peccati." *De Malo*, q. 3, a. 7. "Dissentire (denial of the truth) est actus intellectus, sed motus a voluntate, sicut et assentire." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 10, a. 2.

[87] ". . . assensus accipitur pro actu intellectus, secundum quod a voluntate determinatur ad unum." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 2, a. 1 ad 3.

[88] ". . . daemones non voluntate assentiunt his quae credere dicuntur, sed *coacti evidentia* signorum, ex quibus *convincitur* verum est quod fideles credunt . . ." *De Ver.*, q. 14, a. 9 ad 4.

". . . intellectus credentis assentit rei creditae, non quia ipsam videat vel secundum se, vel per resolutionem ad prima principia per se visa, sed propter imperium voluntatis moventis intellectum. Quod autem voluntas moveat intellectum ad assentiendum, potest contingere ex duobus: uno modo ex ordine voluntatis ad bonum; et sic credere est actus laudabilis; alio modo quia ***intellectus convincitur*** ad hoc quod judicet esse credendum his quae ***dicuntur, licet non convincatur per evidentiam rei . . .***" *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 5, a. 2. Italics added.

[89] St. Thomas several times draws a distinction between these two activities of the mind: capere, percipere, in apprehensionem cadere, and assentire, assensum adhibere. ". . . duo actus rationis attenduntur: primo quidem, ut veritatem circa aliquid apprehendat, et hoc non est in potestate nostra; hoc enim contingit per virtutem alicujus luminis vel naturalis vel supernaturalis. Et ideo quantum ad hos actus rationis non est in potestate nostra, nec imperari potest. Alius autem actus rationis est, dum his quae apprehendit assentit. Si igitur fuerint talia apprehensa, quibus nationaliter intellectus assentiat, sicut prima principia, assensus talium vel dissensus non est in potestate nostra, sed in ordine naturae. . . . Sunt autem quaedam apprehensa, quae non adeo convincunt intellectum, quin possit assentire vel dissentire, vel saltem assensum vel dissensum suspendere propter aliquam causam; et in talibus assensus ipse vel dissensus in potestate nostra est, et sub imperio cadit." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 17, a. 6.

[90] ". . . assentire non nominat motum intellectus ad rem, sed magis ad conceptionem rei quae habetur in mente; cui intellectus assentit dum judicat eam esse veram." *De Malo*, q. 6, a. 1 ad 14.

in itself an act of the will, assent for St. Thomas retains its association with that faculty and reveals itself in contexts where the action of the will is in the foreground.[91]

So, our conclusion is this: The will of itself has no capacity for affirming or denying; it can only impel the intellect to these operations between certain limits. It acts in judgment by concentrating the attention of the mind on certain motives, and by increasing the pull which a conceived object exercises on the mind, in that it wants this object as good. That it is good (under some aspect) is a truth that can move the mind; that it is true may in turn be a good, and as such be coveted by the will.[92] Hence the will is impotent to superinduce assent unless the intellect be in some measure solicited and set going by its own object, and then only to deflect or augment unduly the resulting movement.

3. *Social Application*

More specifically, we must now examine particular phases of falsity affecting social life. And as we confined ourselves in the application of truth to the virtue of truth itself and the rôle of truth in justice we propose to do the same here.

In regarding violations of truth it would be well first to emphasize the social character of speech. Man has been given this endowment precisely because he is a social being. It is the instrument par excellence of communication with his fellow men. In that light its use and abuse cannot but have repercussions in social intercourse.

For the sake of clearness let us use the word untruth for falsity in speech. On examining this untruth we find it has many sides.[93] Man alone can perceive the relation of the thing signified and its means of signification; as a consequence he alone is capable of a

[91] "Potest etiam dici quod intellectus assentit, inquantum a voluntate movetur." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 15, a. 1 ad 3.

[92] ". . . voluntas quodammodo movet intellectum, dum intelligo quia volo; et intellectus voluntatem dum volo aliquid quia intelligo illud esse bonum." III *Sent.*, d. 23, q. 1, a. 2 ad 3; cfr. *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 17, a. 1; I–IIae, q. 75, a. 5 ad 2; I–IIae, q. 83, a. 3 ad 3; *De Ver.*, q. 24, a. 6 cor. and ad 5.

[93] *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 1.

perversion of such a means; it depends on his will. Further, the proper object of this manifestation is the true or the false. As a consequence when one utters untruth with the deliberate intention of so doing and with the further intention of deceiving he is guilty of lying. Over and above this deliberate deception there is utterance of the false without deliberate intention of deceit. Yet this too is dangerous, and sincere but erroneous reformers have been not the least of the scourges of mankind.

So the external manifestation of truth indeed means much to society. Lying is not only unjust, it is unnatural.[94] It is a deliberate perversion.[95] There is also another consideration of untruth, if not necessarily in speech, at least in external action. The name is familiar enough—dissimulation. Dissimulation is directly opposed to truth, involving as it does, deception by word or deed.[96] A species of it is hypocrisy—the external pretense to a virtue one does not possess.[97]

As for the violations of justice involving untruth there is, for example, perjury, to which St. Thomas applies the above designation of perversion, and whose very essence is, he says, falsity.[98] This vice is, of course, connected with process of law and therefore particularly affects the common good. He also lists lying and subterfuge, both phases of untruth, as damaging to the machinery

[94] "Cum enim voces naturaliter sint signa intellectuum, innaturale est et indebitum quid aliquis voce significet id quod non habet in mente." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 109, a. 3.

[95] ". . . quis volens a recte deviat." I *Sent.*, d. 38, a. 1.

[96] ". . . ad virtutem veritatis pertinet ut quis talem se exhibeat exterius per signa exteriora, qualis est. Signa autem exteriora non solum sunt verba, sed etiam facta. Sicut ergo veritati opponitur quod aliquis per verba exteriora aliud significet quam quod habet apud se, quod ad mendacium pertinet; ita etiam opponitur veritati quod aliquis per aliqua signa factorum vel rerum aliquid significet contrarium ejus quod in eo est, quod proprie simulatio dicitur. Unde simulatio proprie est mendacium quoddam in exteriorum signis factorum consistens." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 111, a. 1.

[97] "Unde cum hypocrisis sit quaedam simulatio, qua quis simulat se habere personam quam non habet, consequens est quod directe opponatur veritati, per quam aliquis exhibet se talem vita et sermone qualis est." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 111, a. 3.

[98] *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 70, a. 4.

of justice.[99] As a matter of fact the Angelic Doctor examines in detail the obligation which truth lays on plaintiff, defendant, witnesses and judge.[100]

Untruth is also the foundation of another form of injustice—the deliberate dishonoring of another by false and serious accusations against him. This aspect of untruth comes under the virtue of justice, because it strips a fellow man of a most cherished possession and one rigorously demanding no falsehood against it.[101]

[99] *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 68, a. 3.

[100] *S. T.*, II–IIae, qq. 67–71.

[101] "Cum ergo convicium seu contumelia de sui ratione importet quamdam dehonorationem, si intentio proferentis ad hoc feratur ut per verba quae profert, honorem alterius auferat, hoc proprie et per se est dicere convicium vel contumeliam; et hoc est peccatum mortale non minus quam furtum vel rapina; non enim homo amat suum honorem quam rem possessam." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 72, a. 2.

CHAPTER II

TRUTH AND MODERN SOCIETY

A. Current Thought and Truth

1. *Present Thought*

But recently Mortimer J. Adler made this serious charge against modern thought:

> And, furthermore, I say that the most serious threat to Democracy is the positivism of the professors, which dominates every aspect of modern education and is the central corruption of modern culture. Democracy has much more to fear from the mentality of its teachers than from the nihilism of Hitler. It is the same nihilism in both cases, but Hitler's is more honest and consistent, less blurred by subtleties and queasy qualifications, and hence less dangerous.[1]

By contrast with the thought he indicts and as the basis of his own position Professor Adler offers eight propositions to which, he knows, positivism could in no way agree. (a) Philosophy, he claims, is public knowledge, not private opinion, in the same sense that science is knowledge, not opinion. (b) Philosophical knowledge answers questions which science cannot answer, now or ever, because its method is not adapted to answering such questions. (c) Because of different methods each adapted to different objects of inquiry, philosophical and scientific knowledge are logically independent of one another, and the truth and falsity of philosophical principles or conclusions does not depend upon the changing content of scientific knowledge. (d) Philosophy is superior to science, both theoretically and practically. (e) There can be no conflict between scientific and philosophic truths, although philosophers may correct the error of scientists who try to answer questions beyond their professional competence, just as scientists can correct the errors of philosophers guilty of a similar transgression. (f) There are no systems of philosophy, each of which may be considered true in its own way by criteria of internal consistency, and differing from the others, as so many systems of geometry, in terms of different origins in diverse, but equally arbitrary, postulates or definitions. (g) The first principles of all philosophical knowledge are metaphysical, and metaphysics is valid knowledge of both sensible and supra-sensible being. (h) Metaphysics is able to demonstrate the existence of supra-sensible being, for it can demonstrate the existence of God, by appealing to the evidence of the senses and the principles of reason, and without any reliance upon articles of religious faith.[2]

[1] "God and the Professors," M. J. Adler, *Science, Philosophy and Religion. (A Symposium)* (New York: Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, 1941), p. 128.

What can be said for the point Professor Adler makes? What is the origin of this positivism and what are its consequences? Can we in reading its exponents and examining its principles see this modern thought taking the direction he attributes to it?

"Positivism," says one author, "is philosophy driven into the camp of science by loyalty to the standards of exact research."[3] Positivism is the result of the amazing advances of science in the last two centuries. "Nineteenth-century philosophy is primarily the story of varying reactions to this new science."[4] How was philosophy to approach this new scientific spirit?

> There are three possible points of view open to it. Philosophy might have ignored it altogether and gone on speculating about material things without ever looking in the direction of science. Or it might have entered into a full consideration of the findings of science and rendered an appreciation of their conclusions in the light of the more universal principles of philosophy. Lastly, it might have taken up an attitude of subordination in which philosophy steps down from its high throne as the

[2] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 128–129.

[3] Perry, R. B., *Present Philosophical Tendencies* (New York: Longmans, 1929), p. 38.

[4] Randall, J. H., *The Making of the Modern Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1940), p. 577.

> mistress of sciences and, instead of availing itself of the conclusions of science, becomes its servant.[5]

The paragraph just quoted goes on to say: "This latter attitude has been that of modern philosophy." The procedure took this form: criticism first destroyed the older metaphysical notions by applying whenever possible the methods and principles which had proved so efficient in the region of scientific research.[6] Obviously such a method must needs have profound consequences for philosophy. The consequences in their full sweep reveal themselves in this general description by a historian of last century thought: "Popularly, the best known types of philosophical thought in the three countries are Materialism and Pessimism in Germany, Positivism and social philosophy in France, Naturalism and Agnosticism in England."[7] This is the result though and the need now is to see how and why such currents should arise in the wholehearted adoption and subservience of philosophy to science.

It is a truism to say that one goes where another leads in following the principles and conclusions of that other. What were the general ideas of the science to which philosophy turned? One of the most important and far-reaching was the fact that the ideal of abstract truth suffered belittlement. Science in many cases held that formulas are convenient; they are not true—but useful. "Unity of knowledge, order and harmony, even completeness and symmetry, truth and beauty, are indeed no longer of direct use as canons for the scientific inquirer, any more than mysteries are supposed to be inherent in certain numbers. . . . In the place of the high-sounding but indefinable search after truth, modern science has put an elaborate method of inquiry."[8] This attitude, which Walter Lippmann in a striking phrase calls one of the

[5] Sheen, F. J., *God and Intelligence* (London: Longmans, 1925), p. 71.
[6] Merz, J. T., *History of European Thought in the XIX Century* (London: Wm. Blackwood & Son, 1914), IV, p. 738.
[7] Merz, J. T., *op. cit.*, IV, p. 746. Cfr. Randall, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 528: "Hence while the eighteenth century found its keynote in hope, the nineteenth century expressed, in its philosophy, at least, either disillusionment and pessimism, or a hectic whistling to keep its courage up."
[8] Merz, J. T., *op. cit.*, I, pp. 30–31.

"acids of modernity," proved corrosive of the traditional authorities of the past. Science substituted hypothesis for conclusion.

2. *Scientific Method and Philosophy*

Philosophy followed the lead and, to confine ourselves to thought in America, we see the reflection in such systems as Pragmatism and Instrumentalism. Here is truth according to Pragmatism, for example:

> . . . "truth" in our ideas and beliefs means the same thing that it means in science. It means . . . nothing but this, that ideas (*which themselves are but part of our experience*) *become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience,* to summarize them and get about among them by conceptual short-cuts instead of following the interminable succession of particular phenomena. Any ideas upon which we can ride, so to speak; any ideas that will carry us prosperously from any one part of our experience to any other part, linking things satisfactorily, working securely, simplifying, saving labor; is true for just so much, true in so far forth, true *instrumentally.*
>
> *True ideas are those that we can assimilate, validate, corroborate, and verify. False ideas are those that we cannot.* That is the practical difference it makes to us to have true ideas; that, therefore, is the meaning of truth, for it is all that truth is known as.
>
> *The "true," to put it very briefly, is only the expedient in the way of thinking, just as "the right" is only the expedient in the way of our behaving.* Expedient is almost any fashion; and expedient in the long run and on the whole, of course; for what meets expediently all the experience in sight won't necessarily meet all farther experiences equally satisfactorily. Experience, as we know, has ways of *boiling over* and making us correct our present formulas.
>
> The "absolutely" true, meaning what no farther experience will ever alter, is that ideal vanishing point towards which we imagine that all our temporary truths will some day converge. It runs on all fours with the perfectly wise man, and with the absolutely complete experience; and if these ideas are ever realized, they will all be realized together. Meanwhile we have to live to-

> day by what truth we can get today, and be ready tomorrow to call it falsehood. Ptolemaic astronomy, euclidean space, aristotelian logic, scholastic metaphysics, were expedient for centuries, but human experience has boiled over those limits, and we now call these things only relatively true or true within those borders of experience. "Absolutely" they are false; for we know that those limits were casual, and might have been transcended by past theorists just as they are by present thinkers.[9]

Knowledge in this system "we must identify with human knowledge. Such is knowledge for better or for worse. No hypothetical knowledge can be more infallible or more certain than the processes of that human mind which defines, proves and believes it. It follows that it is possible to know, as fully as it is possible to know at all, a limited portion of reality."[10] Truth is a property of ideas as they arise amid the actual processes of human thinking; its norm is whether or not the idea works, whether it fulfills its function or performs what is demanded of it. "An idea is essentially *for* something, and when it does what it is *for*, it is the right or true idea. And since ideas have a function, which they may or may not fulfill, truth is one of two opposite fortunes which may befall ideas, the other being error."[11]

Instrumentalism expresses itself in a slightly different vein, though in the same environment and in the same temper. The kinship of this system of thought to pragmatism reveals itself in the fact of reference to John Dewey as "the chief exponent of that branch of pragmatism known as instrumentalism," and in such a phrase as this: "John Dewey prefers to call his philosophy experimentalism, or even instrumentalism, but the public continues to regard him as the leading exponent of pragmatism."[12]

The above quotations are evidently justified in the works of Instrumentalism's leading exponent.. Here is an apt summary of his norm of truth:

[9] James, Wm., *Pragmatism* (New York: Longmans, 1910), pp. 58, 201, 222–223. Italics author's.

[10] Perry, R. B., *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[11] Perry, R. B., *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[12] *Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1942), pp. 78, 246.

> If ideas, meanings, conceptions, notions, theories, systems are instrumental to an active reorganization of the given environment, to a removal of some specific trouble and perplexity, then the test of their validity and value lies in accomplishing this work. If they succeed in their office, they are reliable, sound, valid, good, true. If they fail to clear up confusion, to eliminate defects, if they increase confusion, uncertainty and evil when they are acted upon, then are they false. Confirmation, corroboration, verification lie in works, consequences. Handsome is that handsome does. By their fruits shall ye *know* them. That which guides us truly is true—demonstrated capacity for such guidance is precisely what is meant by truth. The adverb "truly" is more fundamental than either the adjective, true, or the noun, truth. An adverb expresses a way, a mode of acting. Now an idea or conception is a claim or injunction or plan to *act* in a certain way as the way to arrive at the clearing up of a specific situation. When the claim or pretension or plan is acted upon *it guides us truly or falsely;* it leads us to our end or away from it. Its active, dynamic function is the all-important thing about it, and in the quality of activity induced by it lies all its truth and falsity. The hypothesis that works is the true one, and *truth* is an abstract noun applied to the collection of cases, actual, foreseen and desired, that receives confirmation in their works and consequences.[13]

Here, too, scientific thought and method have left their imprint. The attitude of the scientist that his formulae are not true, are merely useful and convenient, serving for a time and being supplanted sooner or later by new and other formulae, is carried over to philosophy, introduced and adopted there.

3. *Philosophical Science*

The course of events outlined above reveals itself in another way. Just as there is an introduction of strictly scientific elements into philosophy, so there is an adoption of philosophical attitudes by science. The sciences have been advancing at a prodigious rate and presenting the philosophers with data faster than they

[13] Dewey, J., *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (New York: Henry Holt, 1920), p. 156. Italics author's.

can assimilate it. Moreover, because of the present exaltation of science, the scientists show a tendency to do their philosophizing for themselves.

In broad outline we might contrast the position of the philosopher and scientist as follows: The philosopher takes into account all branches and aspects of human knowledge and experience. The inspiration of the artist, the social urge of the reformer, the emotions of the lover, and the intuitions of the plain man—all are grist to the philosopher's mill. Moreover he must also take into consideration the conclusions and discoveries of the scientist.

The scientist, working away in his own special compartment, devotes his attention to a certain carefully delimited section of the universe. Thus enclosed, he arrives at more or less definite conclusions without stopping to consider what relation they bear to the conclusions reached by other scientists working in their water-tight compartments. In the nature of things this is as it should be; cosmic correlation is not the business of the scientist. So there arises the need for a clearing-house in which the results arrived at by the various sciences can be pooled and collated, in order that, looking at them as a whole, we may be able to infer what kind of a universe it is that we live in, and hazard speculation on the destiny of human life within it.

At present, though, the above distinction is disregarded and that disregard reveals itself in the field of the special sciences. Those sciences, not content with their own special fields, concern themselves with the problem of the reality that underlies the world of science, and further, strive to give a logical account of it *in terms of their own special interest.*

> If we ask, then, how the reality is to be conceived, it is probable that we shall get a number of different answers varying with the personality of the answerer. It is a mathematician's mind according to Sir James Jeans, a universal mind-stuff according to Professor Eddington, an organic unity rather like a person according to Professor Whitehead, a stream or force of life according to Bergson.[14]

[14] Joad, C. E. M., *Guide to Modern Thought* (New York: Frederick Stokes Co., 1933), p. 104.

Take the scientist in physics. Because his world is a world of symbols, he suggests that the world of everyday life is the same. Modern physics claims to have eliminated the notion of substance; chasing it, in Professor Eddington's words, " from the continuous liquid to the atom, from the atom to the electron," physicists " have there lost it." [15] " It is an astonishing feat of deciphering that we should have been able to infer an orderly scheme of natural knowledge from such indirect communication." [16]

Another example of the philosophizing of physicists is the celebrated argument of Sir James Jeans to show that the universe is a thought in the mind of a mathematical thinker. For Sir James the universe is more easily analyzable in terms of mathematical concepts than of those appropriate to any other science. The further we penetrate into the nature of physical things the more plainly are the mathematical principles underlying them laid bare. Substantial matter is in modern physics gradually shredded away; structure and relations only are left. Structure and relations are expressed in terms of mathematical formulae. The universe in short is more like a mathematical formula than it is like a machine, a living organism, a moral concept, or a work of art. Further, having formulated the laws of mathematics for ourselves, we find, when we turn our attention to the things of the outside world, that they obey them. What is the significance of this fact? First, that our own minds and the external world both originate in the constructive operations of the same mind. If that is in fact the case, that they should both work in accordance with the same laws is exactly what we would expect. Secondly, we are justified in drawing an inference as to the nature of this constructing mind; it must think or be capable of thinking mathematically.[17]

The science of biology shows the same tendency. " Here too a momentarily fashionable proclivity is at work: the tendency to glorify becoming or potentiality at the expense of being or actu-

[15] Eddington, Sir A., *The Nature of the Physical World* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 318.

[16] Eddington, Sir A., *Science and the Unseen World* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), p. 23.

[17] Jeans, Sir James, *The Mysterious Universe* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), pp. 159–165.

ality, the way at the expense of the end, the struggle at the expense of achievement. In a natural reaction to 'static,' 'pre-evolutionary' forms of thought, in a too eager response to recent 'dynamic,' 'creative,' 'emergent' and 'relativistic' leadings"[18] enthusiasm overreaches itself.

Along these lines the purely biological theory of emergence is expanded into the philosophical doctrine of life's creativity. In the world of materialist physics there can never be more in the result than there was in the cause. There can, in other words, only be rearrangements of what is already given; and all change and apparent growth must be rearrangements of what is already existing material. But with life, if the hypothesis of creative evolution is correct, this is not so. The mode of life's development is different from that of matter, in that life is continually bringing forth what is new, so that at any given moment in the development of a living organism the organism is literally more than it was at any preceding moment. The process of evolution consists, therefore, in the emergence of even higher levels of vital development, life possessed of greater powers and endowed with a capacity for greater variety and intensity of experience.

Life is a force or principle, at first unconscious or possessing only the latent germs of consciousness, seeking to realize through individuals not only higher powers and extended faculties, but a more conscious realization of the use to which its powers and faculties may be put.

Psychology, too, is of the same mind in some of its exponents. Briefly, but clearly, it reveals itself in attitudes such as this: "No, science is no illusion. But it would be an illusion to suppose that we can get anywhere else what it cannot give us,"[19] or, "Psychologically, God always signifies the greatest value, hence the greatest sum of libido, the greatest intensity of life, the optimum of psychological activity."[20]

[18] Dakin, A. H., *Man the Measure* (Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 254–255.

[19] Freud, S., *The Future of an Illusion.* Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott (London: Hogarth Press, 1928), p. 98.

[20] Jung, C. G., *Psychological Types.* Translated by H. G. Baynes (London: Kegan Paul, 1923), p. 222.

4. *End Result*

The result of all this is an indiscriminate mixture of science and philosophy and a body of doctrine as confused in its results as in its origins. Philosophy is to prove its true worth

> . . . by substituting faith in the active tendencies of the day for dread and dislike of them, and by the courage of intelligence to follow whither social and scientific changes direct us. We are weak today in ideal matters because intelligence is divorced from aspiration. The bare force of circumstance compels us onwards in the daily detail of our beliefs and act, but our deeper thoughts and desire turn backwards. When philosophy shall have co-operated with the course of events and made clear and coherent the meaning of the daily detail, science and emotion will interpenetrate, practice and imagination will embrace.[21]

Such is the present temper—an ideal of power through science, and for society the good life for all through the "intelligent" exercise of power.

Whither all this leads—and more particularly what it points for society—is summed up by Santayana:

> The present age is a critical one, and interesting to live in. The civilization characteristic of Christendom has not disappeared, yet another civilization has begun to take its place. We still understand the value of religious faith; we still appreciate the pompous arts of our forefathers; we are brought up on academic architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, and music. We still love monarchy, and aristocracy, together with that picturesque and dutiful order which rested on local institutions, class privileges, and the authority of the family. We may even feel an organic need for all these things, cling to them tenaciously, and dream of rejuvenating them. On the other hand the shell of Christendom is broken. The unconquerable mind of the East, the pagan past, the industrial socialistic future confront it with their equal authority. Our whole life and mind is saturated with the slow upward filtration of a new spirit—that of an emancipated, atheistic, international democracy.

[21] Dewey, J., *op. cit.*, p. 212.

> These epithets may make us shudder; but what they describe is something deeply rooted in our animal nature and inspiring to our hearts, something which, like every vital impulse, is pregnant with a morality of its own. . . . This spirit is amiable as well as disquieting; liberating as well as barbaric. . . .[22]

The phrase "emancipated, atheistic, international democracy" is worth more than passing notice. Truth, as modern philosophy considers it, has had no small part in forming this ideal for present society. The elements which that philosophy adopts and the ends it sets reveal both their nature and their direction in the startling phrase above.

"These epithets may make us shudder," as Santayana says, but they are demanded if present thought is to be consistent in all its applications. The currents that go to make up that thought are many; but pervading the whole is a scepticism and irrationality which, if not so noticeable in its premises, stands out most clearly in its conclusions.[23]

> The world is full of thinking, but there is no agreement in thought. There are philosophers, but there is no philosophy. Spencerian thought has been buried in the grave of the Unknowable; the history of Pragmatism is now being written in an exaggerated reaction to Idealism. . . . Bergsonian becoming is decaying and a sort of philosophical biologism remains as its heritage. The hurry, the fever, the restlessness, the excitement which blind us to the divine in things, leaves nothing but a philosophy of action for men of action. . . . "Men are suffering from the fever of violent emotion, and so they make a philosophy of it."[24]

More dangerous still, they have taken from science and rationalized a great many irrational factors. Blind evolution, confusion of matter and mind, psychology's appeal to instinctual and sensual drives, discontent with materialism yet withal a refusal to accept the distinction between life and matter, mind and body—all these

[22] Santayana, G., *Winds of Doctrine* (New York: Scribners, 1926), p. 1.
[23] Joad, C. E. M., *op. cit.*, pp. 25–26.
[24] Sheen, F. J., *op. cit.*, pp. 4–5.

contribute to a fluidity of thought whose consequences are now upon us. Clear in the whole picture, though, is a disparagement of reason which asserts that in the realm of thought, reason does not and cannot give us the truth, and which also asserts that in the realm of conduct reason should not, even if it can, guide our lives.

The justification of these statements will, it is hoped, become clearer in the next division of this work. These three present philosophies of society, Communism, German National Socialism and Humanism, will be examined. To point to what all this theory leads to in practice is the aim in setting down these philosophies. Another purpose is to show the essential similarities of the three, although one of them, Humanism, would profess to take violent exception to the hint of such similarity. But on the basis of its own principles and conclusions the likeness is there.

There is in all this thought a reliance upon the instinctive and irrational, a distrust of the operation of the intellect, whose methods are conditioned by the postulate that truth exists and is discoverable. Communism and National Socialism, it is granted, do not disown the activities of the intellect, they indeed are perfectly prepared to make use of them; but they will use them as instruments of propaganda, in order that by the creation of opinion they may further their own purposes, rather than as guides to objective fact. Humanism has the decency to protest its high-mindedness, but in sum and perforce it is on the same level as the other two. In this modern atmosphere Communism and National Socialism are collective Irrationalisms which find their truth in class or race; Humanism is an individualist Irrationalism which makes man the measure of truth. To establish these facts we must now proceed.

B. Current Philosophies of Society

1. *Communism*

The concern of the philosophy of Communism is the development of an irrational reality, self-moving matter. In terms of such matter everything, God, man, society, is explained. The author of that philosophy, Karl Marx, grew and developed in the

atmosphere of thought previously indicated. Its currents reveal themselves in every page of his writings.

For one thing, Marx derived much of his ideology from Hegel. And although Hegel was an idealist believing in the evolution of a universal mind, he conveniently, if not rationally, regarded the process of that evolution as issuing in the Prussian state and its arbitrary rule. Marx took that process and gave it nuances of his own. "In opposition to idealism," says Ueberweg, "Marx possessed an extraordinarily keen eye for the lower instincts of man. In fact they were the only ones that existed for him." [25] In another way, too,

> Orthodox or scientific socialism springing from Marx, has glorified the mechanistic universe and evolution because it has believed it was bringing about inevitably the day of revolution. . . . Marx whose conception of evolution was materialistic and Hegelian, rather than biological, saw the process as the successive struggle of classes for dominance and control. . . .[26]

Moreover, we have Marx's own words that the evolutionary process favored his ideal:

> During . . . the past four weeks I have read all sorts of things. Among others Darwin's work on Natural Selection. And though it is written in the crude English style, this is the book which contains the basis in natural science for our view.[27]

Materialism, out and out, is the cornerstone of Marxian thought. But it was a unique materialism and the contrast reveals itself in the exception Marx took to the prevailing materialism *because it lacked a vitalizing principle*. Engels, Marx's collaborator, writes:

> The materialism of the last century was predominantly mechanical. . . . This exclusive application of the standards of mechanics to processes of a chemical and organic nature—in which processes, it is true, the laws of mechanics are also valid, but are pushed into the background by other and higher laws—constitutes a specific but at that time inevitable limitation. . . . The second specific limitation of this materialism lay in its inability to comprehend the universe as a process—as matter developing in an historical process.[28]

[25] Ueberweg, F., *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, 12th ed. (Berlin: E. S. Mittler und Sohn, 1924), IV, p. 227.
[26] Randall, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 603.
[27] Marx, K., Letter to Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Sect. 2, Vol. 2, p. 533. Quoted by McFadden, C., *The Philosophy of Communism* (New York: Benziger, 1939), p. 25.

Having criticized such materialism Marx and Engels made their contribution in taking the dialectic which had been the heart and soul of Hegel's idealism and making it the center of their own materialism. They took the development of the idea through opposites, thesis, antithesis and synthesis, and placed this development in the material and real rather than in the ideal order. "The mystification which dialectic suffers in Hegel's hands, by no means prevents him from being the first to present its general form of working in a comprehensive and conscious manner. With him it is standing on its head. It must be turned right side up again, if you would discover the rational kernel within the mystical shell." [29] Matter in their scheme instead of being an inert entity capable only of mechanical motion is conceived as essentially active. Things were not distinct and independent realities but parts of one great process wherein all things are related and interdependent.

Materialism, then, means something more for Marxism than epistemological realism and material causality. It means also that all reality, all existence is material or derived from matter as its source. In the name of this materialism it denies all transcendent causality and reduces the universe of Christianity to a reflex of the material world. God, man, society—are all explicable in terms of matter.

In this temper Marx considers man as essentially a practical animal working in matter, that is, as a producing animal. Men distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to pro-

[28] Engels, F., *Ludwig Feuerbach* (New York: International Publishers, 1934), pp. 36–37.
[29] Marx, K., *Capital* (New York: Modern Library, n. d.), Praef. to second edition, p. 25.

duce their own means of subsistence.[30] Consistent with his materialism he looks on human effort as

> . . . a process going on between man and nature, a process in which man, through his own activity, initiates, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and nature. He confronts nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion, arms and legs, head and hands, in order to appropriate nature's productions in a form suitable to his own wants.[31]

Such, in the Marxian solution, is the true nature of man. The trouble with other solutions, it says, is that while they recognize other ideal driving forces, they do not push the investigation far enough back to the real motive cause of all man's activity.[32]

Men erect a state, formulate laws, practice religion and morality, observe social customs and conventions in order that they may secure for themselves the necessities of life. Subjectively men may believe that they are freely choosing a type of state or code of laws; actually these are adopted because men realize that they *must* follow that course under present conditions, to secure for themselves the necessities of life. Subjectively men feel that they are freely practicing religion for so-called supernatural reasons; actually that reason is demanded by the current mode of production based on private ownership. Subjectively men believe they are freely observing a given code of morality; actually that code of morality is economically determined. Subjectively men believe that they are freely choosing their type of art, literature and music; actually these in turn are economically determined.

Dialectical Materialism has also its "dialectical" theory of knowledge. In such a philosophy mind, of course, far from possessing an existence independent of matter, is actually identified with it. Yet that materialism makes a distinction between the two—a distinction, though, of degree rather than kind, indicating that mind is primary without exaggerating the distinction.[33]

[30] McFadden, C., *op. cit.*, p. 90.
[31] Marx, K., *op. cit.*, p. 197.
[32] Engels, F., *op. cit.*, p. 59.
[33] Lenin, V., *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (New York: International Publishers, 1927), pp. 118, 207.

There is an inseparable connection (unity in opposition) between the subjective activity of man and the objective material activity, the reality which it reflects. Its product, knowledge, is "nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought." [34]

The problem of objective truth is "not a question of theory but a practical question," [35] which can only be proved on action where man integrates himself with nature and nature takes on a human character.

> In order to discover whether our ideas are true we must act on them. In acting on them we change the external environment. The true idea, then, is one which is validated by the outcome of the interaction between our practical activity, which expresses the meaning of the idea, and the external object, which calls it forth.[36]

The social result of this philosophy is that in the present capitalist era "the objective truth of Marxism realizes itself in the informed revolutionary act. Marxism is neither a science nor a myth, but a realistic method of social action." [37] All truth resides with the disenfranchised proletariat and is realized only with its ascendency.

> The final causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought, not in men's brains, not in man's better insight into eternal truth and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange. They are to be sought, not in the philosophy, but in the economics of each particular epoch. The growing perception that existing social institutions are unreasonable and unjust, that reason has become unreason, and right wrong, is only proof that in the modes of production and exchange changes have silently taken place with which

[34] Marx, K., *op. cit.* Praef. to second edition, p. 25.
[35] Hook, S., *From Hegel to Marx* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1936). Marx's II Thesis on Feuerbach wherein this statement is found is incorporated herein, p. 281.
[36] Hook, S., *Towards an Understanding of Karl Marx* (New York: John Day, 1933), p. 103.
[37] Hook, S., *op. cit.*, p. 114.

the social order adapted to earlier economic conditions is no longer in keeping.[38]

Thus, too, the virtues of truth and justice are restricted to the proletarian class:

> We say that our morality is wholly subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. We deduce our morality from the facts and needs of the class struggle of the proletariat. . . . That is why we say that a morality taken from outside of human society, does not exist for us; it is a fraud. For us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletarian class-struggle.[39]

Such is Communist philosophy in its antecedents, its theory and its application to society. Its conclusion is this: truth is the interest of the proletariat, law the weapon of its struggle for power. It does profess truth—the truth of class.

2. *German National Socialism*

The philosophy, if it can be called that, of German National Socialism demands a different treatment. Though according to its proponents it is a *Weltanschauung,* it is difficult to define. Nazi orators and writers make the task no easier when they say it is untranslatable, inexpressible, infallible, indivisible—which tells nothing. "The truth is that it can be understood only as a kind of retrospective philosophical justification of Nazidom. It is well known that with such a dynamic movement, the theory may follow rather than precede the events." [40]

Unlike Communism, National Socialism has, more or less, formed and defined its philosophy as it went along. But the point is that as a philosophy of society it reflects the intellectual atmosphere of its times—though it has pushed the irrational elements of that atmosphere to frightening conclusions. One of the

[38] Engels, F., *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* (New York: International Publishers, 1935), p. 54.

[39] Lenin, V., *Religion* (New York: International Publishers, 1933), pp. 47–48.

[40] Roberts, S. H., *The House That Hitler Built* (New York: Harpers, 1938), p. 45.

proponents of the German Faith Movement, for instance, Wilhelm Hauer, in his book, *Deutsche Gottschau,* argues that the real deity is the spirit of the race and that national history is more than a sequence of facts; it is a *Werden,* a becoming, an evolution; it is the spirit of the race always in suspense, always in movement, a progress of Being, a revelation. This is no more than emergent evolution with an umlaut.

We have, from an accurate observer who witnessed its rise and growth, a short and clear summary of the National Socialist *Weltanschauung.*

> This then is the German philosophy of which Alfred Rosenberg and Walter Darre are the high priests, and the anthropologists, and biologists and historians in every German university are the acolytes. There is a Nordic "Volk" triumphant over everything. This depends on the unalterable facts of Blood and Soil and the two combine over long periods of time to produce a race of supermen. Within the "Volk" the naturally superior specimens come to the fore. Democracy is a historical accident of the last century, Communism a Jewish disease in debased Slav-Russia; there only remains, then, a system of government in which the interests of the individual are cheerfully surrendered to those of the community, or "Volk" as a whole. This system is National Socialism and within it the "Fuehrer" is the mouthpiece of the "Volk," revealing its best interests by some kind of inspiration. As such he must be accorded blind obedience so that the "Volk" may prosper.[41]

The importance of these ideas cannot be exaggerated. With them we pass from the sphere of politics proper into a realm of a philosophy which imposes upon the Germans a mission entrusted to them from on high. Politics, *Weltanschauung,* and religion are inextricably locked together. The vindication of Race (Volk) and Blood (Blut) and Soil (Erbe) in the subjection of the weaker is a divine mission. This doctrine is set forth as the *volkische Weltanschauung,* the philosophy of life of the German people. *Volkisch* in this connection is translated by the English word national which poorly conveys the connotation of racial and spiritual

[41] Roberts, S. H., *op. cit.,* p. 57.

solidarity implied by the word. Implicated in *volkisch* is the racial purity, the pristine glory and heroism of the original Nordic, Aryan or Teutonic family.

The general attitude of National Socialism is revealed in an extremely crude, albeit revealing phrase of one of the earlier leaders of the party. "Objectivität," says Ernst Roehm, "ist Unpersonlichkeit, ist Afferweisheit." [42] Much of its theory is a monument of pseudo-scholarship full of absurdities, misstatements, and bizarre theories. With its scientific refutation we are not concerned.[43] Our point is that undisciplined minds have brought together some of the advance theories of rationalistic criticism and though they have used them, not in the interests of rationalism, but of romantic racism, they cannot be separated from the present intellectual atmosphere. "Fascism" (in this case the German form), says C. E. M. Joad,

> is pervaded by a thorough-going anti-intellectualism. Now particularly in its German form, it repudiates the notion that there is an absolute truth or set of truths which can be discovered by the human mind by a process of reasoning, and communicated to others by a process of exposition and argument. . . . Professing a general distrust of abstract reason, it has much in common with the criticisms of scientific method which have been authoritatively put forward during the last two decades.[44]

The all important factor for the *Volk* is blood. "The sin against the blood and the degradation of the race are the hereditary sins of this world," says Hitler, "and the end of a mankind surrendering to them." [45]

[42] Röhm, E., *Die Geschichte eines Hochverraters*, 2nd ed. (München: Verlag de N. S. D. A. P., Franz Eher, 1930), p. 327.

[43] For the scientific refutation of Nazi theory see Kleinberg, A., *Race Differences* (New York: Harpers, 1935); Montagu, A., *Man's Most Dangerous Myth, the Fallacy of Race* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942); *Scientific Aspects of the Race Problem*, by H. S. Jennings and others (New York: Longmans, 1941).

[44] Joad, C. E. M., *Guide to Philosophy of Morals and Politics* (London: V. Gollancz, 1938), pp. 614–615.

[45] Hitler, A., *Mein Kampf*, a complete and unexpurgated edition (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1940), p. 339.

> What does blood mean to us? We cannot rest satisfied with the teachings of physics, chemistry or medicine. From the earliest dawn of the race, this blood, this shadowy stream of life, has had a symbolic significance and leads us into the realm of metaphysics. Blood is the builder of the body and also the source of the spirit of the race. In blood lurks our ancestral inheritance, in blood is embodied the race, from blood arises the character and destiny of man: blood is to man the hidden undercurrent, the symbol of the current of life, from which man can arise and ascend to the regions of light, of spirit, and of knowledge.[46]

All reality is interpreted in terms of race and blood. For Alfred Rosenberg, the official philosopher of National Socialism, "the racial soul of the people (*die rassengebundene Volksseele*) is the measure of all our thoughts, all the motions of our will, all our actions; it is the final norm of our values." [47] This line of thought is pushed to the extreme of concluding that God would not exist if soul and blood did not exist.[48] Hence the importance of racial purity and hence eugenics as the normative discipline of the new religion! In practice this is realized when, for example, the *Nationalsozialistche Monatshefte* reproduced in huge letters that occupy a whole page, a saying of Ernst Arndt: "To be a People—that is the religion of our time." [49]

Such in short is reality in the National Socialist scheme. The clearest summary of its body of knowledge is the fact that Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Rosenberg's *Der Mythus des 20 Jahrhunderts* [50]

[46] Krieck, E., "The Education of a Nation from Blood and Soil," *Internationale Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft*, 1933–1934, Drittes Heft, pp. 310 ff. The quotation is from the English translation of the original "Volkische Erziehung aus Blut und Boden," same issue, p. 305 ff.

[47] Quoted in Micklem, N., *National Socialism and the Roman Catholic Church* (Oxford University Press [issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs], 1939), p. 19.

[48] Micklem, N., *op. cit.*, Chapter II.

[49] Roberts, S. H., *op. cit.*, p. 270.

[50] "Prelections from Mein Kampf preceded and followed by Nazi hymns, are constantly read at Party meetings with great solemnity. Many visitors to Berlin may remember a distinguished photographer's window in Unter den Linden which displayed to the public gaze a picture representing a corner in Hermann Goering's Karin-Hall; in the dark background might

are its textbooks. Consistent with their teaching, education like life itself must be rooted in blood and soil, if it is not to become formal and mechanical.[51] Its ideal is this:

> The folkish State, through this realization, has to direct its entire education primarily not at pumping in mere knowledge, but at the breeding of absolutely healthy bodies. Of secondary importance is the training of the mental abilities. But here again first of all the development of the character, especially the promotion of will power and determination, connected with education for joyfully assuming responsibility, and only as the last thing, scientific schooling.[52]

The character of the scientific schooling which might be allowed can be gathered from a further statement of the German leader: "For the rest, it is the task of a folkish State to see to it that at last a world history is written in which the race question is raised to a predominant position."[53]

Hitler expresses the same idea, also, when speaking of the winning of the people; in order that the necessary blind faith be sustained, one's own teaching must be unalterable and infallible and it must be anchored in feeling rather than in thought.

> The great mass of a people consists neither of professors nor of diplomats. The small abstract knowledge it possesses directs its sentiments rather to the world of feeling. . . . He who would win the great masses must know the key which opens the door to their heart. Its name is not objectivity, that is, weakness, but will power and strength.[54]

be discerned the features of a Gothic Madonna; in the foreground, upon a sumptuous lectern flanked by candles set on noble candlesticks, there lay a de luxe edition of Mein Kampf." Micklem, N., *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Rosenberg's *Der Mythus des 20 Jahrhunderts* (München: Hoheneichen-Verlag, 1930), may be studied in English # *46 Mythus I. The Worship of Race* and # *44 Mythus II. The Character of the New Religion* (London: "The Friends of Europe" publications, 1933).

[51] Cf. Kandel, I., *The Making of Nazis* (Columbia University Press, 1935), pp. 51 ff.

[52] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 613.

[53] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 630. Cfr. Ziemer, G., *Education for Death* (Oxford University Press, 1941) for an eyewitness account of present German education. The author, formerly principal of the American school in Berlin, was granted exceptional privileges in his examination.

Knowledge is not the mind's apprehension of some objective fact which is known; knowledge is what the Nazi Party as the highest expression of the *Volk* has decided that individuals should believe; ignorance or error is what the same Party has decided that individuals ought not to know.

But naturally, also, truth is the creation of the Aryan:

> It is a futile enterprise to argue which race or races were the original bearers of human culture and with it, the actual founders of what we sum up with the word "mankind." It is simpler to put this question to oneself with regard to the present, and here the answer follows clearly and distinctly. What we see before us of human culture today, the results of art, sciences, and techniques, is almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan. But just this fact admits of the not unfounded conclusion that he alone was the founder of higher humanity as a whole, thus the prototypes of what we understand by the word "man." He is the Prometheus of mankind, out of whose bright forehead springs the divine spark of genius at all times, forever rekindling that fire which in the form of knowledge lightened up the night of silent secrets and thus made man climb the path towards the position of master of the other beings on this earth. Exclude him—and deep darkness will again fall upon the earth, perhaps even after a few thousand years, human culture would perish and the world would turn into a desert.[55]

Rhapsody? Yes. But it matters not in the least whether we agree with this philosophy or not; what matters is that we are confronted with a *Weltanschauung* in action, with the ruthless driving force and energy of a fanatic dictator behind it—a ruthless fanatic just because he conceives himself to be a vessel of absolute truth, and through that truth saviour of the soul of his people. And, as one observer notes, to the German it is all very

[54] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 467–468.

[55] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, pp. 397–398.

natural for it symbolizes to him the ceaseless struggle for roots in a world in which moral standards are tottering.[56]

The translation of all this theory into practice has been swift, expedient and logical. The virtues of truth and justice and their organs of expression in present-day Germany clearly reveal this. Here again the point of departure is the same: "All that is not race in this world is trash." [57]

Moral truth is identified with force—" . . . the most striking success of the revolution of a view of life will always be won whenever the new view of life is, if possible, taught to all the people, and if necessary, is later forced upon them, while the organization of the idea, that means the movement, has to embrace only so many as absolutely necessary for the occupation of the nerve center of the State involved." [58]

Truth, the object of the theoretical reason, is subordinated to, if it is not dismembered in the interests of living; morals and the disciplines of the passions, study and the life of the mind, which have been traditionally enjoined upon man by authority, reason and experience alike, are jettisoned in the interests of "fuller" living. "Goebbels," says an eye-witness, "has arrived at a mathematical relationship between the stream of propaganda and any individual's power of resistance, and if his margin is sufficient to wear down foreigners, how much more effective is it for his own nationals, predisposed as they are to be converted to the achievements of the new regime." [59]

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[56] Roberts, S. H., *op. cit.*, p. 56.

[57] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 406.

[58] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 852.

[59] Roberts, S. H., *op. cit.*, p. 28. ". . . many apparent absurdities, exaggerations or eccentricities must be ascribed neither to ignorance nor stupidity or even vindictiveness; they arise from a primary and more or less conscious disregard of objective truth. For the only function of cognition in political, and even philosophical matters, as they see it, is to equip the fighting nation and the leaders who mould it with the most effective weapons possible." Kolnai, A., *The War Against the West* (London: Collancz, 1938), p. 59. This work, though published under the auspices of the Left Wing Book Club, is an exhaustive study of the fundamental irrationalism of National Socialism. It has also the merit of an excellent bibliography.

Justice is in the same pattern. Simply "whatever is useful to the German people is right; whatever is harmful is wrong." [60]

> The blood community of the race . . . *i. e.*, the nation, is the pivotal point of all earthly existence. The nation alone is a purpose in itself. Everything else is a means to an end and must serve the good of the nation, everything including justice and law. Justice is whatever is of benefit to the nation, whatever corresponds with the German feeling of justice, the unadulterated voice of God in the race-pure soul.[61]

When the cornerstone of the vast *Haus de Deutschens Rechts* was laid at Münich Dr. Frank, Minister of Justice, gave expression to the new idea of law as a living, malleable reflection of a nation's current morality. National Socialism had, according to him, closed the unhappy gap that hitherto had existed between justice and the people. Spirit had triumphed over form, common sense over arid academic theories, and healthy evolution over a paralyzed static conception. Law is to be living and vital, it changes with the community, and is justified only in so far as it gives expression to the spirit of the community and its rulers.[62]

Such is the atmosphere, spirit and result of German racism. Its reality is attested to by its strength and importance in present-day Germany. Whether Hitler and his Party are political opportunists or not, they appeared when any order was better than chaos; when any ruler who restored unity and the strength which comes with unity was better than drifting and being at sixes and sevens; when any cause which offered man the chance of escaping from selfishness and self-indulgence into the service of a supra-personal ideal was better than demoralization. The ideal on which they built was truth—the truth of race.

3. *Humanism*

That which goes under the name of Humanism today has many

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[60] Herr Wagner, Bavarian Minister of the Interior, quoted in Joad, C. E. M., *op. cit.*, p. 646.

[61] *Westdeucher Beobachter*, May 17, 1936, quoted in Micklem, N., *op. cit.*, p. 162.

[62] Roberts, S. H., *op. cit.*, p. 289.

faces. It professes, for instance, in its highest—or lowest—reaches to be a religion and as such is defined in the second unabridged edition of Webster's New International Dictionary as: "a contemporary cult or belief calling itself religious, but substituting faith in man for faith in God." The dictionary then cites a sentence of Dr. C. F. Potter's: "Humanism is faith in the supreme value and self-perfectibility of human personality."

With Humanism as such an organized movement and its vitality we are not greatly concerned. Our concern is with its ideas whose influence and prevalence in English-speaking countries especially, none can gainsay. The degrees of difference between those who call themselves Humanists are not particularly important; what is important is their ideas and trends of thought —the common forming ground for a whole group of self-styled "advanced" thinkers.

Probably the most expressive statement of what Humanism means appeared in the May-June, 1933, issue of the *New Humanist*. The editor of that periodical, Mr. R. B. Bragg, observed at that time:

> The Manifesto is a product of many minds. It was designed to represent a developing point of view, not a new creed. The individuals whose signatures appear, would, had they been writing individual statements, have stated the propositions in differing terms. The importance of the document is that more than thirty men have come to general agreement on matters of final concern and that these men are undoubtedly representative of a large number who are forging a new philosophy out of the materials of the modern world.

After a lengthy preamble demanding changing views in a changing world, the Manifesto details the points on which Humanists would agree:

> First: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.
>
> Second: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process.
>
> Third: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.
>
> Fourth: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely moulded by that culture.
>
> Fifth: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.
>
> Sixth: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought."
>
> Seventh: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation—all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.
>
> Eighth: Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.
>
> Ninth: In place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.
>
> Tenth: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.
>
> Eleventh: Man will learn to face the crises of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that

humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene, and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

Twelfth: Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

Thirteenth: Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and programme of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

Fourteenth: The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate and that a radical change in methods controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and cooperative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently cooperate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

Fifteenth and last: We assert that humanism will: (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from it; and (c) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive morale and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

The use of "religion" and "religious" which constantly recurs in the above is to evaluate in the light of the previously given definition of Humanism: "a contemporary cult or belief calling itself religious but substituting faith in man for faith in God."

Starting from the postulate that since nothing is better known than man he must be the norm of thought and action, Humanists portray him each according to his own likeness. They can be classified in three groups, depending upon their estimate of his

place in the universe. There is the optimistic school which holds high hopes for man and his development in the universe. There is the pessimistic school which stresses the subjectivity, the relativity, and the frustration of human desires. And, last, there is the mediating school which strives to reconcile cultural, personal points of view with clear, abstract, scientific points of view.

John Dewey, one of the signers of the Manifesto, indicates a general attitude of Humanists to the all-embracing character of science when he says:

> Science is not constituted by a particular body of subject matter. It is constituted by a method, a method of changing beliefs by means of tested inquiry, as well as arriving at them. It is its glory, not its condemnation, that the subject-matter develops as the method improves. The identification of science with a particular set of beliefs and ideas is itself a holdover of ancient and still current dogmatic habits of thought which are opposed to science in its actuality and which science is undermining.[63]

It is "from science rather than from ethics and religion . . . philosophy should draw its inspiration," claims Bertrand Russell.[64] In such a vein he concludes that the postulation of creation out of nothing is unwarranted. The world would seem to have had a beginning in time, but that is no reason for concluding it was made by a Creator. "There is no reason whatever why the universe should not have begun spontaneously, except that it seems odd that it should do so; but there is no law of nature to the effect that things which seem odd to us must not happen. To infer a Creator is to infer a cause, and causal inferences are only admissible in science when they proceed from observed casual laws. Creation out of nothing is an occurrence which has not been observed." [65]

So, too, Humanists take over the conclusions of psychology, and

[63] Dewey, J., *A Common Faith* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1934), pp. 38–39.

[64] Russell, B., *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays* (London: Longmans, 1925), p. 98.

[65] Russell, B., *The Scientific Outlook* (New York: Norton, 1931), pp. 117–118.

God in their scheme, far from being the supreme reality demanded by the postulate of reason, becomes a projection into the universe of man's own sense of personal agency.[66] Here the method of a school of psychology is adopted and the result is the above. That school realizes clearly enough that, unlike the other natural sciences, it is dealing not with the objects of consciousness, but with consciousness itself. Moreover, not content with this abstractive device as a method of clarification, it pushes it further and makes it an ultimate means of discriminating between truth and error, reality and delusion. Humanists, enthralled by such science, follow its subjectivism to the last degree.

Under such auspices and in the same way do Humanists excogitate their body of knowledge. The Manifesto previously quoted is the best and fairest summary of the result. On examination their affirmations fall roughly into two groups, one of primarily naturalistic import reflecting the influence of science, the other humanistic and a by-product of the refinement of civilization by Christianity. The naturalization of the universe (item one), man (items two, three, and eight), and religion (items four, five and six) belong to the first group. The second group includes the humanistic view of religion (items seven, nine, and ten) and of the individual and society (items eleven to fifteen). In the name of Science, progress and relativism Humanists eliminate God (items one, five, and six), assign the origin and nature of man to an irrational process (items two, three, and four), make him the measure of truth (items eight to twelve), establish the general nature of the naturalistic society they would have (items thirteen to fifteen).

Truth for Humanists here shows its antecedents. In one way or another it is equated with practical consequences and efficiency and man becomes, not only the measure of truth, but to an indefinable extent the master and creator of reality. Reason, no longer the key to reality and truth, is often treated as the tool of instinct, will and emotion to be used for purposes beyond its ken. Logic as working itself out in historical events and institutions, overshadows logic as a dissection of ideas and propositions.

[66] Sellars, R. B., *Religion Coming of Age* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 159.

"Scientifically approved," "emotionally satisfying," "idealistic attitude," "dynamic," "forward looking," "vital"—all these are phrases used by the Humanists to summarize their attitude.

But the inversion to which they are compelled lest they find plan, purpose, value, a meaning in the nature they extol is revealed in such side-stepping as this:

> A rational world is a world that reason can grasp and because of this, it is associated in our minds with reason and thought of as akin to it, but as a matter of fact, the relation between intelligence and order is just the reverse of the one the idealist suggests. It is intelligence which presupposes order and not order which presupposes intelligence. Without order in the world the human reason could neither have risen nor could it have got leverage upon the world. An orderly world is rational only in the sense that it is suited to reason. It is the kind of world in which reason can arise and operate.[67]

Thus the circle is completed from St. Thomas to modern thought. St. Thomas finds the explanation of the irrational in the rational and true; present exponents find the explanation of the rational and true as they would have it in the irrational.

We need not speculate on the practical working out of all this theory. It has been clearly stated. In merely setting it forth, moreover, we can see further justification for bringing together Communism, National Socialism and Humanism as all stemming from the same source. To this, of course, Humanists would take violent exception. They particularly identify their theories with Democracy and are the loudest and most vocal in their condemnation of the excesses of the dictatorships. Professor O. L. Reiser defines Humanism as "the doctrine that men, through the use of intelligence, directing the institutions of democratic government, can create for themselves, without aid from 'supernatural powers,' a rational civilization in which each person enjoys economic security and finds cultural outlets for whatever normal human capacities and creative energies he possesses."[68] The ob-

[67] Sellars, R. B., *op. cit.*, p. 220.

[68] Reiser, O. L., "The Social Objectives of Humanism," *The New Humanism*, December, 1934.

jectives of Humanism then outlined are in such harmony with the objectives of Communism and National Socialism that the agreement is more than coincidental. The only difference is, as M. J. Adler says, the fact that the dictatorships are less queasy in pushing their conclusions to the ultimate in practical results.

Some of the objectives outlined are these: (1) in social relations: (a) abolition of institutional authority in fixed beliefs; (b) modernization of courts and legal procedure; (c) sterilization of defectives unfit to be parents; (2) in the family: (a) eugenics; (b) birth control; (c) divorce by mutual consent; (d) removal of the illegitimacy stigma; (3) in education: mental hygiene facilities (clinics) for all.[69]

Communism and National Socialism have effectively abolished institutional authority and fixed beliefs; have modernized their courts and legal procedure; have sterilized defectives, introduced eugenics, birth control, divorce and removal of the illegitimacy stigma. The results in the name of class or race have been and are being recounted in numerous articles, books and in the daily newspapers. Should Humanists have their way the same results would be recounted in the name of man.

Humanism, to localize it, has been called typical of Anglo-Saxon liberals.

> . . . Anglo-Saxons on account of their devotion—supposedly more marked in themselves than in other peoples—to liberty, tolerance, order, and peace, and on account of a generally "idealistic" attitude as native and welcome to them as it is frequently alien and suspect to others. Rationalistic in their faith in science, intelligence, planning, and in their hatred of institutional authority for anything with which they disagree. Liberal, because in almost everything their appreciation of the new seems too eager, ill-considered, well meant and confused to those called conservative, and timid, overscrupulous, well meant and confused to those commonly called radical.[70]

Such is the nature of the individualist irrationalism of Humanism.

[69] Reiser, O. L., *loc. cit.*
[70] Dakin, A. H., *op. cit.*, p. 176.

CHAPTER III

A CRITIQUE

A. Of Truth of Class

1. *Agreement and Difference*

The rejection of reason whose progress we have indicated in the previous chapter was at first individualist. A substitute, though, had to be found to supply for that rejection. Some turned to a cult of æsthetic emotion withdrawing from the real world of irrational forces into an equally irrational but consoling world of phantasy. Some cultivated an egoism, the enjoyment of power or pleasure. A great many refused to think at all about the meaning of life and immersed themselves in "practical living." But the laws of reality must inevitably bring home to men, whether they yield to them or not, the consciousness of their own weakness when they adopt a cult of individualist egotism.

In self-defense, then, irrationalism became social and then powerful and dangerous. We have seen this in Marxism and National Socialism. Even Humanism, the apotheosis of determined individualism, was pushed to a social consciousness. Its own program, quoted at the end of the last chapter, reveals a panicky and frantic effort whose result is an alignment with what it so vocally condemns.

This is not to say that modern thought completely abandoned truth. Such an over-simplification would be as much a disservice to truth as the over-emphasis on race, class, or man which we now propose to criticize in the light of Thomistic wisdom. Our contention is that extreme positions have, as they inevitably must, generated error. Obviously, to immediately take an extreme position ourselves would be to nullify our critique and fall into the error we are seeking to point out.

The above thoughts suggest our procedure. What elements of truth do we find in the philosophies we condemn? If we do find

truth as well, why do we condemn? But by the same token partial truth is no guarantee of the lack of vicious error. It is in fact the best assurance of the propagation of that error. Error is dangerous only inasmuch as it possesses a certain portion of mutilated truth.[1]

Judging by present acceptance and also by present activity Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism can indeed score a point in their favor. Many factors of course have combined to bring them to this popularity—and by no means the least of these has been brute force. But our concern here is not the social or economic or military or any other of many important ferments at work within these systems; our problem is in their philosophical structure. And our examination will deal with the intrinsic worth of that structure.

2. *Theories of Knowledge*

The strength and weakness—if you would, the truth and error—of Marxism is admirably suggested for our purpose in the following:

> There are in Marxist epistemology a certain number of traits which do not displease a Thomist: its aversion to idealism, its affirmation of the reality of the external world, the rôle it grants to the body in knowledge itself (in the first degree of human knowledge), the importance (unfortunately principal) which it bestows upon material causality, the sense which it possesses of historical becoming (and which reduced to just proportions would be a highly philosophical sense, but which in the Marxist theory devours everything).[2]

One of the first points of agreement between Marxism and Thomism is the importance both assign to a theory of knowledge. Knowledge and the truth resulting from it is for St. Thomas, as we have already seen, a particular mode of being. St. Thomas

[1] ". . . sicut se habet bonum in rebus, ita verum in cognitione. Impossibile est autem inveniri aliquid in rebus quod totaliter bono privetur. Unde etiam impossibile est esse aliquam cognitionem quae sit falsa, absque admixtione alicujus veritatis." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 172, a. 6.

[2] Maritain, J., *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 43.

examined the process of intellectual cognition minutely because of his estimate of its worth. "The greatest among the perfections of things is that a thing is intellectual, because thereby it is, after a fashion, all things, having within itself the perfections of all."[3] That which is most perfect in any intellectual nature is intellectual operation, according to which it seizes in a certain way all things."[4] Further, because knowledge and truth are indissolubly united, the perfection of a spiritual nature (in Thomistic thought any intellectual being must be such) consists precisely in knowledge of the truth.[5]

Now the preoccupation to know what knowledge is, is by no means spontaneous to man.[6] Yet it would be laboring the obvious to call attention to St. Thomas' concern with it. As a patient observer, a philosopher studying the deepest reaches of all things, he was not content to know, but he wanted to find out why he knew and what he knew. That quest itself and the fidelity in which he pursued it show better than mere protestations his devotion to, among other great facets of his philosophy, a theory of knowledge.

Marxism, too, recognized and turned its thought to the same problem. Engels calls it one of the great basic questions of all philosophy.[7] Holding to a rigid materialism Marxism inevitably raised difficulty for itself in that problem. As we have pointed out in the previous chapter[8] Marxists would admit no difference of kind between mind and matter. Yet it is perhaps an unconscious tribute, even though an inconsistent one, that they strenuously insist on a difference, at least in degree, to secure for

[3] "Inter perfectiones autem rerum potissima est quod aliquid sit intellectivum: nam per hoc ipsum est quodammodo omnia habens in se omnium perfectionem." I *C. G.*, 45.

[4] "Id autem quod est perfectissimum in qualibet intellectuali natura, est intellectualis operatio, secundum quam capit quodammodo omnia." *S. T.*, I, q. 26, a. 2.

[5] "Perfectio autem spiritualis naturae in cognitione veritatis consistit." *De Ver.*, q. 15, a. 1.

[6] Cfr. Gilson, E., *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, p. 261.

[7] *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 30.

[8] Chapter II, p. 49.

themselves the activity of mind and an important place for it in their philosophy.

We have seen, moreover, how they speak of true ideas. "To be a materialist is to acknowledge objective truth revealed by our sense organs."[9] This in philosophical language is called "the identity of thinking and being."[10] The dynamism of Marxism, its activities not only in the theoretical establishment of its premises but in the practical sphere, show a serious, almost fanatical devotion to the thought of Marx and Engels. Here there is no dilettantism, rather a deep concern that could only arise from a conviction of worth.

3. *Materialism and Idealism*

Another point of contact for Marxism and Thomism is their reaction to extreme Idealism. St. Thomas establishes his position by reference to two extremes of Grecian thought—the materialism of Heraclitus and the idealism of Plato.[11] To the theory of knowledge of both St. Thomas takes exception. His strong rejection of Platonic idealism, moreover, is evidenced in the choice of the word "derisibile"—an unusual word for St. Thomas whose kindness and recognition of his opponents is ever present in his works—to characterize its position. He then goes on to adopt his own position of moderate realism in the Aristotelian tradition. And the issue here is not merely one of rejecting or adopting the

[9] Lenin, V., *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, p. 104.

[10] Engels, F., *op. cit.*, p. 31.

[11] ". . . primi philosophi, qui de naturis rerum inquisiverunt, putaverunt nihil esse in mundo praeter corpus. Et quia videbant, omnia corpora mobilia esse et putabant ea in continuo fluxu esse, existimaverunt, quod nulla certitudo de rerum veritate haberi posset a nobis. Quod enim est in continuo fluxu, per certitudinem apprehendi non potest, quia prius labitur quam mente dijudicetur; sicut Heraclitus dixit. . . . His autem superveniens, Plato, ut posset salvare certam cognitionem veritatis a nobis per intellectum haberi, posuit praeter ista corporali aliud genus quod nominabat species, sive ideas; per quarum participationem unumquodque istorum singularium et sensibilium dicitur vel homo, vel equus, vel aliquid hujusmodi. Sic ergo dicebat, scientias, et definitiones, et quidquid ad actum intellectus pertinet, non referri ad ista corpora sensibilia, sed ad illa immaterialia et separata, ut sic anima non intelligat ista corporalia, sed intelligat horum corporalium species separatas." *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 1.

solution of a particular doctrine but rather of deciding for or against an entire philosophy.

> St. Thomas unmasks behind every one of the doctrines he combats the latent presence of Platonism; if he rejects these doctrines, the reason is that in his eyes it is the business of philosophy to interpret the real world of Aristotle, not the world of appearances described by Plato. And, again, if he holds firmly to the real world of Aristotle, the reason is an assertion of sheer common sense beyond and behind which it is impossible to go.[12]

We have seen previously[13] the program to which Marx and Engels committed themselves in breaking with the inert materialism of the eighteenth century. Their own system they called "Dialectical Materialism" to set it apart and indicate their contribution.

> Dialectical Materialism distinguishes itself and its point of view by its affirmation—(a) of the reality and knowability of the world of material reality; and (b) of the inseparable connection (unity in opposition) between the subjective activity of Man and the objective material activity, the reality, which it reflects.[14]

Dialectical Materialism is explicitly and chronologically a revolt against Hegelian idealism. Marx started his study of philosophy with Hegelianism which was in his time the official philosophy of all German universities. But from the first he was repelled by it. Though the complete formulation of his own thought came only years later, it is significant of the bent of his mind that in this Hegelian atmosphere his choice for a doctoral dissertation was a comparative study of the philosophies of Democritus and Epicurus. Hegel he considered as having stood dialectic on its head. His collaborator Engels tells us how Marx and himself "comprehended the concepts in our heads once more materialistically—as images of real things, instead of regarding the real things as im-

[12] Gilson, E., *op. cit.*, p. 194.

[13] Chapter II, pp. 48–49.

[14] Jackson, T., *The Logic of Marxism* (London: M. Lawrence Co., 1936), p. 575.

ages of this or that stage of development of the Absolute Concept." [15]

4. *Confidence of Reality*

As a corollary to this last agreement of Marxism and Thomism both reveal a robust confidence in the attainment of reality. We have had occasion previously to note the lament of a modern thinker apropos of "the deep vein of Agnosticism as to the nature of ultimate reality, and of Scepticism as to the constructive power of reason" noticeable in current thought.[16] Both Thomism and Marxism are complete and integrated philosophies sure enough of themselves to apply their principles and to seek to make them work through the whole of reality.

"Whatever can be, can be understood," says St. Thomas simply.[17] We have but to recall the passage previously quoted in chapter one where he shows how the process of knowing contributes to the perfection of the universe. Because the specific being of one thing differs from the specific being of another thing any one being is imperfect as only a part of the total perfection achieved by the aggregate of all things. But here is the unique perfection of knowing; for it is the character of knowledge that the thing known in a sense exists in the knower. And the conclusion from this ideal of knowledge is that "according to this mode of perfection it is possible that the perfection of the entire universe exist in a single and particular thing." To open such a vista to the mind certainly bespeaks a confidence in its work, a consciousness of its worth and a conviction of its efficacy.

"Every mysterious, subtle and insidious difference," says Lenin in the Marxist tradition, "between the appearance and the thing-in-itself is an absolute philosophic fallacy. In fact each of us has observed the simple and palpable transformation of the 'thing-in-itself' 'into the thing-for-us.' This transformation is cognition." [18] Marxism, moreover, would not have the mere understanding of things considered as individual entities as true

[15] *Ludwig Feuerbach*, p. 54.
[16] Chapter I, p. 18.
[17] ". . . quidquid enim esse potest, intelligi potest." II *C. G.*, 98.
[18] Lenin, V., *op cit.*, p. 93.

knowledge of reality. It is akin to Thomism in a consciousness of relations, objective and subjective, relation between mind and things, between external realities and between concepts themselves.[19] "There are," as we previously quoted Maritain, "in Marxist epistemology a certain number of traits which do not displease a Thomist: its aversion to idealism, its affirmation of the reality of the external world, the rôle it grants to the body in knowledge itself (in the first degree of human knowledge) . . ."

5. *Point of Departure*

But these points of agreement between Marxism and Thomism do not imply an identity of the two systems. Far from it! There is a chasm between both and the principal factor for its depth and impassability is suggested in the next line of the quotation from Maritain—"the importance (unfortunately principal) which it (Marxism) bestows upon material causality." Marxism is by predisposition and conscious choice a rigorous materialism. Thus orientated, all reality—God, man, society, and everything else—is explained and discussed in terms of matter alone. Thomism is realistic, yes, but not materialistic. St. Thomas, we know, pointed to out and out materialism and avoided it just as carefully as he pointed to and avoided extreme idealism.[20] Thomistic thought holds Marxism guilty of an extreme as violent and as erroneous as the extreme that same Marxism would combat. In that charge Thomism finds the source of the errors whereby Marxism vitiates the truth it perceived. Because Marxism is logical in that vitiation its mutilated truth reflects itself in the mutilated society it has erected.

On its own principles Marxism is forced to the conclusion that along with all else mind, the knowing process, knowledge and truth are entirely material. While indicating the Marxist concern for a theory of knowledge we saw from its own words the position to which it was pushed to secure this. It is sure of the mind and its activity; it is equally sure of its own materialism. It must reconcile both without doing violence to either. So it insists on

[19] Engels, F., *op. cit.*, p. 54.
[20] Cfr. above, p. 70.

the independent character of mind and matter, yet lest mind elude its rigid materialism and introduce an insuperable problem, it holds a difference between mind and matter not of kind but of degree. So far it is consistent, but consistency, unfortunately, is not always the guarantee of reliability.

St. Thomas is also concerned with matter as well as mind. The above sentence was so framed because it is readily granted that Thomistic thought, framed in the Christian tradition, is genuinely concerned with the "things of the spirit"—vaporous nothings in Marxian ideology. Its concern with the mundane is generally more suspect. But St. Thomas, the realist, faced the same problem as Marxism, more keenly aware of its antinomies, just as concerned for its solution, and more respectful of the reality he faced.

Mind there was, he said, and matter there was. And mind apprehended reality, or rather mind assimilated reality.[21] Now he had to face the fact that material creatures differed from one another [22] and further that they were set apart by the matter of each.[23] St. Thomas' solution to this is in summary his adoption of the Aristotelian ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ ὄντα πώς ἐστι πάντα "anima quodammodo est omnia." [24]

But there is still the problem of matter. Matter is impervious and changeable and on that score St. Thomas recognized that should he conclude to the reality of matter and nothing else, then he would be in the same dilemma as Heraclitus (and by implication of all materialists, Marxists included) who, he says, was

[21] "Cognito fit per assimilationem cognoscentis et cogniti." *I. C. G.*, 65.

[22] ". . . esse specificum unius rei est distinctum ab esse specifica alterius rei, ideo in qualibet re creata hujusmodi perfectioni habitae in unaquaque re, tantum deest de perfectione simpliciter, quantum perfectus in aliis speciebus invenitur; ut cujuslibet rei perfectio in se consideratae sit imperfecta, veluti pars totius perfectionis universi, quae consurgit ex singularium rerum perfectionibus, invicem congregatis." *De Ver.*, q. 2, a. 2.

[23] The statement of this fact is implied by the problem Thomists set for themselves. Cajetan, one of St. Thomas' commentators, says: "Duo quaeruntur concurrentia ad individuationem, scilicet quo primo natura specifica reddatur incommunicabilis et quo primo realiter distinguitur ab aliis ejusdem speciei." De ente et essentia, C. IV. Cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 3, a. 2 ad 2; III, q. 77, a. 2.

[24] *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 1.

forced to deny any certitude to things because of the impermanent and changing character of the material world.[25]

St. Thomas' solution we have already indicated in the first chapter. The mind knows all reality, enriches itself with that reality. In a previous quotation from the *Contra Gentiles* [26] we saw how St. Thomas regards the intellectual process not as an "epiphenomenon" on the surface of life, but as the life process par excellence. Examining the material world in terms of its activity and distinguishing between transitive and immanent activity he ranges through the degrees of being and by a progressive dematerialization demanded as life becomes higher, he concludes to the immateriality and perfection of the mind and its life. "The immateriality of anything is the reason it is cognitive; and the mode of knowledge is proportionate to the mode of immateriality." [27]

This does not mean that man is divorced from and rendered independent of the material world. Rather he is a part of that world and in radical dependence on it.[28] Here Thomism and Marxism agree in their recognition of material causality. But the bridge Marxism builds to span the gap between mind and matter has such a low clearance that man must stoop so low in traveling under it as not to be able to lift his eyes from the material world. The bridge Thomism builds is high enough for man to walk with his feet on the ground and his eyes on the spiritual and immaterial.[29]

The immateriality demanded for knowledge implies also some degree of the same immateriality in the objects of our knowledge.

[25] Cfr. above, no. 11.

[26] IV, *C. G.*, 11. Cfr. Chapter I, pp. 4–5.

[27] "Immaterialitas alicujus rei est ratio quod sit cognoscitiva; et secundum modum immaterialitatis est modus cognitionis." II *De Anima*, c. 8. Cfr. *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 2. "Relinquitur ergo quod oportet materialia cognita in cognoscente existere, non materialiter, sed magis immaterialiter. Et hujus ratio est, quia actus cognitionis se extendit ad ea quae sunt extra cognoscentem. Cognoscimus enim etiam ea quae extra nos sunt."

[28] Chapter I, pp. 8–12.

[29] ". . . intellectus species corporum, quae sunt materiales et mobiles, recipit immaterialiter et immobiliter secundum modum suum: nam receptum est in recipiente per modum recipientis." *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 1.

Knowledge is an assimilation, a more vital process than the anabolism of biological life. Analogically, just as the living body assimilates material reality, so in a higher sense does the mind assimilate reality too. But in the biological process the organism in assimilating changes the matter received so that it ceases to exist of itself; in the intellectual process the mind enriches itself with the form of the thing known, though that thing does not cease to exist outside of the mind knowing it. Material things, then, are the object of our mind and there must be in the material thing some element on which the mind can work.[30]

Moreover, it is not the particularity but the materiality of the individual thing which resists intelligibility.[31] Just as immateriality is the condition of knowledge,[32] so separation of some sort from matter is requisite in the object of knowledge. Perfectly consistent with his whole philosophy, St. Thomas finds this element in the form of the thing.

> How this comes about can be clearly seen. For whatever things bear such relation to one another that one is the cause of the other's existence, that one which stands in the relation of cause can have existence without the other, but the converse does not hold true. The relation of matter and form, however, is found to be of such kind because the form gives existence to matter, and, therefore, it is impossible for the matter to be without some form, but it is not impossible that there be a form without matter, for the form as form does not have any dependence on matter.[33]

There is, then, in things also an intelligible element capable of separation from matter. De facto, form is individualized in matter in the things of this world. But because it can be separated from matter it is intelligible in potency at least.[34] In this refined sense and by this accurate analysis St. Thomas can arrive at the conclusion that the unique prerogative of the knowing mind is its ability to become other than itself by the apprehension of the forms of things.[35]

[30] "Scibilia naturalia sunt priora quam scientia nostra et mensura ejus." *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 8 ad 3.

[31] "Singulare non repugnat intelligibilitati inquantum est singulare, sed inquantum est materiale, quia nihil intelligitur nisi immaterialiter; id quod repugnat intelligibilitati est materialitas." II *C. G.*, 75.

[32] "Ipsa immaterialitas substantiae intelligentis creatae non est ejus intellectus, sed ex immaterialitate habet virtutem ad intelligendum." *S. T.*, I, q. 56, a. 1.

[33] *On Being and Essence* (*De Ente et Essentia*), translated from the Latin by Clare C. Riedl (Toronto: St. Michael's College, 1937), C. 4, p. 32.

The difference between the Marxist and Thomistic theories of knowledge can be further emphasized in many directions. One directly connected with their truth theories and hence of interest to our thesis has been chosen.

The whole trend of Thomistic thought evidences how highly the life of knowledge is held. St. Thomas by a progressive process of dematerialization arrives at the activity of thought immaterial in its origin and nature. Another characteristic of this life of the mind is its interiorness. In line with the recognition of a two-fold activity, transitive and immanent[36] and consonant with the general principle "the more immanent the activity, the higher the life"[37] St. Thomas is justified in extoling, as he does, contemplative knowledge.

The mind superior to matter, is distinct from it and dependent on it only in an accidental way.[38] Because of its superiority the

[34] ". . . formae autem in materia existentes non sunt intelligibiles actu." *S. T.*, I, q. 79, a. 3; cfr. I *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3; *De Ver.*, q. 10, a. 6.

[35] "Forma autem in his quae cognitionem participant, altiori modo invenitur quam in his quae cognitione carent. In his enim quae cognitione carent, invenitur tantummodo forma ad unum esse proprium determinans unumquodque; quod etiam naturale uniuscujusque est. Hanc igitur formam naturalem sequitur naturalis inclinatio, quae appetitus naturalis vocatur. In habentibus autem cognitionem sic determinatur unumquodque ad proprium esse naturale per formam naturalem, quod tamen est receptivum specierum aliarum rerum; sicut sensus recipit species omnium sensibilium, et intellectus recipit species omnium intelligibilium." *S. T.*, I, q. 80, a. 1. Cfr. Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

[36] "Duplex enim est actionis genus: una scilicet quae transit in aliquid exterius . . . alia vero actio est quae non transit in rem exteriorem, sed magis manet in ipso agente; sicut sentire, intelligere et velle; per hujusmodi enim actionem non immutatur aliquid extrinsecum, sed totum in ipso agente agitur." *S. T.*, I, q. 54, a. 2.

[37] IV, *C. G.*, 11.

[38] *Q. D., De Anima*, a. 15. "Anima non indiget sensibilibus ad intelligendum secundum suam naturam, sed per accidens."

life of the mind is self-contained. It is not essential that the product of the mind's meeting with reality—once that meeting has been consummated—be ordered to action.[39] Not that the mind does not return to reality and give direction to action—the denial of this phase would give the lie to all St. Thomas' practical philosophy. But the *essential* value of intellectual activity consists in mind's ability to know reality and to seek this knowledge as an end in itself. The possession and contemplation of such knowledge produces the development and perfection of the mind.[40] Truth, therefore, will be discovered, and to a large extent, in this contemplative activity.

Marxism, as we have seen it, is obviously forced to an opposite conclusion. The implications which demand this are found in its conception of the nature of knowledge as essentially materialistic and destined solely for action.[41] Such a position would hold the ideal of contemplation for philosophy as not only incomprehensible but useless. Action on material reality is the concern of knowledge in the Marxist scheme. That means no independent life for the mind; material reality is the measure of the mind's worth both because the mind is a part and no more of that reality and because the function and worth of mind is judged solely in terms of practical results consequent on its application to the material world.

How far apart Thomism and Marxism stand here as each follows the logical development of its own principles is evident in the complete and off-handed dismissal of metaphysics—and religion—by Marxism.

> There exists in the world—so the Marxists tell us—a vast "secteur," a vast province which is not yet submitted by science to man's domination: now, metaphysics and religion (for the Marxists do not distinguish the one from the other) are but a way of anticipating, in terms

[39] "Accidit autem alicui apprehenso per intellectum quod ordinetur ad opus, vel non ordinetur." *S. T.*, I, q. 79, a. 11.

[40] "Nam intelligere est perfectio et actus intelligentis. . . . Intelligere non est actio progrediens ad aliquid extrinsecum, sed manet in operante, sicut actus et perfectio ejus." *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 4.

[41] Cfr. Chapter II, p. 50.

> of imagination, a supremacy not yet acquired in practice. Metaphysical reason refers to the non-dominated province, which it pretends to construct theoretically in such a way that it dominates it in the imagination. God and being qua being have been created for the sake of dominating this province which yet remains inaccessible. When real and practical domination replaces this imaginary domination, the illusory constructions of metaphysics and religion will vanish of themselves. And when will this occur? No doubt when the "practical domination of the external world will be assured by such a high degree of material productive forces, that the advent of a society without classes and without individual increase in value will enter the domain of the possible."[42]

6. *God, Man, Society*

As we follow further these two theories of truth and society we begin to see the consequences wherein both influence society in so diverse a manner. The ideas of God, man and society, as Thomism and Marxism present them, have been chosen to exemplify that divergence. These ideas can be traced, if we wish, down to the smallest details of daily life; but here our concern is with their general philosophic import and consequently only their broad bearings will be indicated.

God, for St. Thomas, is absolute Truth, the guarantee of intelligibility. Human knowledge in his theory consists in the apprehension of the thing known. We saw previously how things are understandable, at least in potency, for the mind. That is the proximate reason for their intelligibility. But St. Thomas goes much further than this in finding and securing the intelligible elements of the universe he so much insists on. Through the form, he says, a thing (a) has being, (b) is adequated to the divine intellect, (c) causes a true concept in the human intellect.[43] The alternative to this conclusion is that everything happens by chance. Had St. Thomas accepted this alternative he would have betrayed the intelligibility of which he was so certain.

No, that intelligibility points to pattern and design and a supreme Mind. Things are intelligible and the mind is intelligent

[42] Maritain, J., *op. cit.*, pp. 51, 52.

[43] *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 8. See no. 33, Chapter I.

and truth is attainable because they have their source in one first Truth. "Either truth, namely of the mind or of the thing," says St. Thomas, "is reduced, as into a first principle, to God Himself, because His being is the cause of all being, and His understanding is the cause of all knowledge." [44] Things are true "by one first truth to which each is assimilated according to its entity. And so, although there are many essences or forms of things, there is, nevertheless, one truth of the divine intellect, according to which all things are called true." [45] The mind knows because "the soul does not judge of all things according to any truth, but according to the first truth inasmuch as this results in her, as in a mirror, according to the first intelligibles." [46]

Intelligibility for St. Thomas blossoms into supreme intelligence. This is a far cry from the irrational and mechanical universe of the Marxists. The ideas—and idea is another word for form [47]—of all created or possible reality are in the divine mind from all eternity. They are the infinitely many and varied forms and manners in which the infinite divine nature and being can be reflected and in a sense reproduced in created reality. Evidently when these ideas or logical forms become embodied in the objective reality of the universe, they become forms and structural elements of the universe. These forms then are the direct and

[44] "Utraque autem veritas, scilicet intellectus et rei, reducitur sicut in primum principium in ipsum Deum; quia suum esse est causa omnis esse, et suum intelligere est causa omnis cognitionis." I *Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1. Cfr. Chapter I, pp. 20–22.

[45] "Si vero loquamur de veritate secundum quod est in rebus; sic omnes verae, una prima veritate, cui unumquodque assimilatur secundum suam entitatem. Et sic, licet, plures sint essentiae vel formae rerum, tamen una est veritas divini intellectus secundum quam omnes res denominantur verae." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 6.

[46] ". . . anima non secundum quamcumque veritatem judicat de rebus omnibus; sed secundum veritatem primam, inquantum resultat in ea, sicut in speculo, secundum prima intelligibilia." *S. T.*, I, q. 16, a. 6 ad 1.

[47] "Idea enim graece, latine forma dicitur. Unde per ideas intelliguntur formae aliarum rerum praeter ipsas res existentes. Forma autem alicujus rei praeter ipsam existens, ad duo esse potest: vel ut sit exemplar ejus cujus dicitur forma, vel ut sit secundum principium cognitionis ipsius, secundum quod formae cognoscibilium dicuntur esse in cognoscente." *S. T.*, I, q. 15, a. 1.

proper object of human intelligence and reason. By means of a variety of mental operations we succeed more or less perfectly in isolating them and determining them as the embodied ideas of the divine Architect, just as in human works of art we are able to recognize the ideas of the human artist that gave them birth. Thus and thus alone are we able to enter into the possession of truth.[48] In this sense St. Thomas' realism is idealistic.

> Further the idea which forms every natural thing must also be the principle of matter, since matter is a sort of degeneration of mind. For the same reason it must be its end, and that helps us to imagine the final transformation of the world as depicted by St. Thomas. Begotten of mind, penetrated with mind, tending towards mind, the world may one day become more or less mind. The determinism of physical laws may be, to a great extent, provisional. Even the physical world may perhaps share, with the world of spirits, in the "liberty of the children of God." [49]

Marxism, rigidly held to exclude any non-material element from the universe, fell back on an anthropology—now outmoded—to explain the prevalent notion of God and a spiritual soul.

> From the very early times when men, still completely ignorant of the structure of their own bodies, under the stimulus of dream apparitions came to believe that their thinking and sensation were not activities of their bodies, but of a distinct soul which inhabits the body and leaves it at death—from this time, men have been driven to reflect about the relation between this soul and the outside world. If in death it took leave of the body and lived on, there was no occasion to invent yet another distinct death for it. Thus arose the idea of its immortality which at that stage of development appeared not at all

[48] "Finis autem ultimus uniuscujusque rei est qui intenditur a primo auctore vel motore ipsius. Primus autem auctor et motor universi est intellectus. . . . Oportet igiur ultimum finem universi esse bonum intellectus. Hoc autem est veritas. Oportet igitur veritatem esse ultimum finem totius universi; et circa ejus considerationem principaliter sapientiam insistere." I *C. G.*, 1.

[49] Sertillanges, A. D., *Foundations of Thomistic Philosophy* (St. Louis: Herder, 1931), pp. 179–180.

> as a consolation but as a fate against which it was no use fighting, and often enough, as among the Greeks, as a positive misfortune. Not religious desire for consolation, but the quandary arising from the common universal ignorance of what to do with this soul (once its existence had been accepted) after the death of the body—led in a general way to the tedious notion of personal immortality. In an exactly similar manner the first gods arose through the personification of natural forces. And these gods in the further development of religions assumed more and more an extramundane form, until finally by a process of abstraction, I might say of distillation, occurring naturally in the course of man's intellectual development, out of the many more or less limited and mutually limiting gods there arose in the minds of men the idea of the one exclusive god of monotheistic religions.[50]

Important as is the point that this position is based on false science, the fact is that Marxism, even though taxed with this charge and admitting it, would still be forced to a violent atheism:

> . . . more profoundly, the discovery of historical materialism, as Marx conceived it, implies an absolutely atheistic position; because it implies a universal process of substitution of the dialectic of history for all transcendent causality, and for the universe of Christianity in general; it implies consequently an absolute naturalistic immanentism, by hypothesis exclusive of all divine transcendence.[51]

Thus do Thomism and Marxism stand apart on the idea of God.

In the first chapter of this work we saw the position of man as St. Thomas envisioned it.[52] Man's worth in relation not only to the material world but to the whole universe is clearly delimited. He is at the summit of material creation; he is set apart from the rest of that creation by intelligence. He shares with higher creatures a life and activity that makes him unique. That life and activity give the tone to his perfection and happiness. It is not

[50] Engels, F., *op. cit.*, pp. 30–31.
[51] Maritain, J., *op. cit.*, p. 18.
[52] Chapter I, pp. 6–13.

material goods, nor sensual pleasure, nor is it even the practice of the moral and active virtues, good as this is, that is the final happiness of man; no, his final happiness is in the contemplation of truth, an activity shared by no other material creature save himself.[53]

In this emphasis is St. Thomas setting an unreal goal for man, turning his back on his real condition and disregarding his present place in a world of material reality? The balance we have noted before in the Thomistic scheme, its fruition in the Aristotelian tradition, is the sufficient answer to that charge. But before we present this aspect of St. Thomas' conception of man we might cite a modern witness who, in his own appreciation, indicates the direction it will take.

> In sober Aquinas there is already the blend between this sense of the worth-whileness and dignity of all that is specifically human, and the antique humanism of Aristotle. Thomas has hardly a trace of asceticism; his whole treatment of the flesh and its impulses is inspired by the Aristotelian principle of maintaining the supremacy of the most characteristically human part of man, his reason. For this reason, and this alone, is carnality to be regulated. Though the head of scholasticism reached to heaven, its feet were firmly planted on the solid ground of a humanistic appreciation of man's life as an organic union of soul and body.[54]

Marxism goes to the extreme of identifying man with the material; Thomism, though in opposition to this, has never made the mistake of completely identifying man with his intellect.

> One of the surprises in store for the historian of Christian thought lies in its insistence on the value, dignity and perpetuity of the human body. The Christian conception of man is almost universally taken to be a

[53] "Si igitur ultima felicitas hominis non consistit in exterioribus, quae dicuntur bona fortunae; neque in bonis corporis; neque in bonis animae secundum actum moralium virtutum; neque quantum ad intellectivam secundum actum moralium virtutum; neque secundum intellectuales quae ad actionem pertinent, scilicet artem et prudentiam: relinquitur quod ultima hominis felicitas sit in contemplatione veritatis." III *C. G.*, 37. Cfr. *S. T.*, I–IIae, 1–5; III *C. G.*, 25–63.
[54] Randall, J. H., *The Making of the Modern Mind*, p. 117.

> more or less thorough-going spiritualism. What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? To cultivate the soul, to purify, and thus to liberate it, and finally to save it—there, it would seem, is the whole end and effort of Christianity. Add to this that the Christian God is spirit, that man therefore can hold communion with God only in the spirit, that God, in short, would be adored in spirit and in truth—and how, after all that, should we not expect to see the Christian philosopher bringing all his forces to bear on the spiritual part of man, that is to say on the soul, and making little account of the perishable part, the blind and mindless body that knows nothing of God? But to the no small scandal of a goodly number of historians and philosophers the contrary turns out to be the fact.[55]

The confirmation of this is revealed in the above chapter one to which we have called attention as giving St. Thomas' basis for the worth of man. The mind's operation, he says, is an immaterial activity rooted in an immaterial substance. But withal, he breaks with Plato for disregarding the union of soul and body and thereby concluding to an erroneous theory of knowledge. The mind needs the body because its object is material things—" our knowledge can go only so far as it is led by sensible objects "—" from material bodies and in material bodies it achieves its own intelligible perfection." [56] True to his own principles St. Thomas is very much aware of the sensitive and vegetative life of man and all their implications. In his general solution of that problem, while emphasizing the intellectual he demands, too, place for the life of the body.[57]

Marxism also very much aware of the material element in man's makeup ends by making it all. In line with its general position,

[55] Gilson, E., *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, pp. 168–169.

[56] " Tantum se nostra naturalis cognitio extendere potest, in quantum manuduci potest per sensibilia." *S. T.*, I, q. 12, a. 12; ". . . a corporibus et in corpora suam perfectionem intelligibilem consequantur." *S. T.*, I, q. 55, a. 2.

[57] " Unde dicendum est quod nulla alia forma substantialis est in homine nisi solo anima intellectiva, et quod ipsa sicut virtute continet animam sensitivam et nutritivam, ita virtute continet omnes inferiores formas et facit ipsa sola quidquid imperfectiores formae in aliis faciunt." *S. T.*, I, q. 76, a. 4.

as we have already pointed out,[58] it regards as non-existent any spiritual or immaterial factor in man as well as in the rest of the universe. Man, in its own words, is a practical animal, a producing animal working on matter. In such a view it becomes clear why Marxism considers metaphysics and religion as vain imaginings that can only stultify progress. The material necessities of life and their production are the end of man. There is nothing more basic than these factors in the history of mankind, and insistence on any others beclouds the issue and acts only as a barrier to man's happiness. Existence of other factors is not denied but their primacy is vigorously questioned. Indeed, this is a consistent materialism!

It is a fact well known that Marxism arose as a protest against the inhuman condition of man in a capitalistic society. By that much it is good. But it would purchase a more human law by laws of production that are in themselves anything but human; these are the laws of the machine and the machine can devour man. In a comparison between Marxism and National Socialism the ideal man of Marxism has been likened to the power which drives the machine while the ideal man of National Socialism is conceived as the perfect beast. The National Socialist race is a herd of wild beasts, the Marxist proletariat a power station.[59]

Marxism shows appreciation in a high degree of man's material work and its worth. Yet by its denial of transcendent causality it denies not only the Being that makes matter good in itself, but also the intellectual and spiritual basis in man that dignifies his work as distinctly human. What it fails to see is the implication of mind in the manufacturing and the machine. As M. J. Adler has shown manufacturing involves a grasp of the form of the thing and its duplication by imprinting that form upon many units of matter.[60]

Marxism thus supposes a philosophy of work at the same time that its radical materialism makes such a philosophy impossible.

[58] Chapter II, pp. 48–49.

[59] Watkins, E. I., *The Catholic Centre* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1939), p. 105.

[60] Adler, M. J., *What Man Has Made of Man* (New York: Longmans, 1937), p. 235.

This same failure appears in the inability of Marxism to analyze the end of human activity—production somehow becomes its own end. Thus it jeopardizes its own accomplishment in the practical order by forfeiting its appreciation of the human dignity of labor to the mechanical necessities of industrial production. Its historical materialism and labor theory have strength in the order of the practical; they are, though, at the same time the cause of its fundamental weakness. It has truth but not enough. Marxism needs St. Thomas.

Finally, the divergence of thought so far indicated between these two philosophies emphatically continues in their theories of society. We might expect St. Thomas' ideal of the life of the mind to shine forth here—and it does. Disorder in human society arises "from the fact that the man at the head has no head"—a colloquial summary of a passage of St. Thomas.[61] Governance of human society is not by sheer imposition of will or the clash of human passions but by the direction of reason.[62] Reason, too, settles the problem with which Marxism is so concerned—the unequal distribution of wealth. The regulation of material possessions is of utmost importance. But contrary to Marxism, Thomism considers private ownership the best system, the most orderly and the most peaceful.[63] A real injustice which aroused Marxism to such an emotional pitch that it lapsed into an extreme position, though appreciated by Thomism too, is treated with balance and understanding. Private property is recognized by reason and treated reasonably.[64] But a sufficiency of temporal

[61] "Illi qui intellectu praeeminent naturaliter dominantur . . . in regimine humano ordinatio provenit ex eo quod non propter intellectus praeeminentiam praeest." III *C. G.*, 81.

[62] ". . . in recta gubernatione multitudinis non permittimus quod homines principentur, scilicet secundum voluntatem et passiones humanas, sed quod principetur homini lex, quae est dictamen rationis, vel homo qui secundum rationem agat." *In X Libros Ethicorum*, lib. 5, lect. 6.

[63] ". . . per hoc (private ownership) magis pacificus status hominum conservatur, dum unusquisque re sua contentus est. Unde videmus quod inter eos qui communiter et ex indiviso aliquid possident, frequentius jurgia oriuntur." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 66, a. 2.

[64] ". . . proprietas possessionum non est contra just naturale, sed juri naturali superadditur per adjuventionem rationis humanae." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 66, a. 2 ad 1.

goods (*corporalium bonorum sufficientia*) is neither the primary nor the sole end of society.

We have seen St. Thomas' high ideal of man and in that high ideal he sets down the principle that the end of the state (the organ of society) depends on the idea of man.[65] Because man is an intellectual being the virtuous life of its citizens is the prime end of the state, the securing of material prosperity secondary.[66] Moreover, the state exists for men, not men for the state. This last is due to specifically Christian elements at work in St. Thomas' work. Aristotle, St. Thomas' Greek precursor, never fully arrived at that position. For him, and for pagan thought in general, the individual was subordinate to the state—the important thing was to be a good citizen.[67] But Christianity assigned to man a supernatural end, the enjoyment of God; and while St. Thomas admits and holds that the public good, the good of society, is, in general, more important than the good of an individual, this does not hold when the private good is of a higher order.[68]

All the above would seem to demand an excessive individualism productive of anarchy rather than order for society. But, no, man is a social being and that by his very nature:

> Man is called by nature to live in society; for he needs many things which are necessary to his life, and which by himself he cannot procure for himself. Whence it follows

[65] "Unde secundum quod homines diversimodi existimant de fine vitae humanae, secundum hoc diversimode homines existimant de conversatione civitatis." *In Libros Politicorum*, lib. 2, lect. 1.

[66] ". . . ad bonum autem unius hominis vitam duo requiruntur, unum principale quod est operatio secundum virtutem. Virtus enim qua bene vivitur, aliud vero secundarium et quasi instrumentale, scilicet corporalium bonorum sufficientia, quorum usus est necessarius ad actum virtutis." *De Regno*, lib. I, cap. 15.

[67] Cfr. *Politics*, 1252, a. 1–6.

[68] ". . . dicendum quod sicut bonum multitudinis est majus, quam bonum unius, qui est de multitudine; ita est minus quam bonum extrinsecum ad quod multitudo ordinantur." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 39, a. 2 ad 2; ". . . homo non ordinatur ad communitatem politicam secundum se totum, et secundum omnia sua." Cfr. *S. T.*, I–IIae, 21, 4 ad 3; *De Virtut. cardin.* a. 4 et ad 3. Cfr. Gilson, T., *op. cit.*, Chapter 10 for a discussion of the origin in Christian philosophy of the exaltation of the individual.

> that man naturally becomes part of a group, to procure him the means of living well. He needs this assistance for two reasons. First, in order that he may obtain the elementary necessities of life; this he does in the domestic circle of which he is a part. Every man receives from his parents life and nourishment and education; and the reciprocal aid of the family members facilitates the mutual provision of the necessities of life. But there is a second reason why the individual is helped by the group, of which he is a part, and in which alone he finds his adequate well-being; and this is that he may not only live, but live the good life, having everything which suffices him for life. Thus civil society aids the individual in obtaining the material necessities by uniting in the same city a great number of crafts, which could not be so united in the same family. And civil society also assists him in the moral life.[69]

St. Thomas, moreover, is optimistic of the bond of union between men. Man is naturally friendly to man. Proof of this natural friendliness between men may be had in the fact that a man by a kind of natural instinct, comes to the assistance of another man, even a stranger, who is in need—for instance, by warning him if he has taken the wrong road, or by helping him to rise if he has fallen, and so forth.[70] Our common human na-

[69] "Sciendum est autem quod quia homo naturaliter est animal sociale, utpote qui indiget ad suam vitam multis, quae sibi ipse solus praeparare non potest; consequens est quod homo naturaliter sit pars alicujus multitudinis, per quam praestetur sibi auxilium ad bene vivendum. Quo quidem auxilio indiget ad duo. Primo quidem ad ea quae sunt vitae necessaria, sine quibus praesens vita transigi non potest: et ad hoc auxiliatur homini domestica multitudo, cujus est pars. Nam quilibet homo a parentibus habet generationem et nutrimentum et disciplinam. Et similiter singuli, qui sunt partes domesticae familiae, se invicem juvant ad necessaria vitae. Alio modo juvatur, homo a multitudo, cujus est pars, non solum quantum ad corporalia, prout scilicet in civitate sunt multa artificia, ad quae una domus sufficere non potest; sed etiam quantum ad moralia . . ." *In X Libros Ethicorum*, lib. I, lect. 1.

[70] "Est autem omnibus naturale ut se invicem diligant; cujus signum est quod, quodam naturali instinctu, homo cuilbet homine etiam ignoto subvenit in necessitate, puta recovando ab errore viae, erigendo a casu et alii hujusmodi, ac si omnis homo omni homini familiaris et amicus." III *C. G.*, 117.

ture and our common end is the basis of this charity.[71] In this vein St. Thomas concludes that justice alone is not sufficient to secure society peace. Justice, it is true, begets peace, but only indirectly by removing the obstacles in the way of peace. Peace results directly from charity.[72] Charity is thus the bond of society and without it society cannot be preserved.[73]

In Marxism we have likened man to the power which drives the machine and the proletariat to a power station. The comparison is justified in the conclusions of Marxism as to the nature of society. Reality, here, is simply productive society which, in turn, is entirely sufficient for itself and has no further end than its own being. We have noted how St. Thomas was concerned with the materially productive side of life. Marx, though, was so obsessed by it that his theory of society is the philosophical expression of a complete preoccupation with the economic and nothing more. Society is understood as having meaning only when identified with class, the class of exploited workers or proletariat. Nor is there even a glimmer of intelligence here because society is determined by historical causes.[74]

By contrast to Thomism's insistence on the virtuous life, private property and the natural bond of union between men, Marxism takes the opposite position of economic productivity, communism and class warfare as elemental in society. Granted that men fall into error and make mistakes, yet the life of the mind and the pursuit of truth brings with it for St. Thomas an optimistic view of man in which there is reason and expectation that men can live

[71] "Oportet enim esse unionem affectus inter eos quibus est unus finis communis." *Ibidem.*

[72] ". . . pax est 'opus justitiae' indirecte, inquantum scilicet removet prohibens; sed est opus charitatis directe, quia secundum propriam rationem charitas causat pacem. Est enim amor vis unitiva . . ." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 29, a. 3 ad 3.

[73] "Homo naturaliter est animal sociale. . . . Societas autem inter homines conservari non posset nisi unus alium juvaret." III *C. G.*, 131.

[74] "But what I should like to note here is the typical procedure of dialectical materialism: this consists not merely in recognizing the importance of history, but in using the *history* of a thing, first in order to juggle away the *nature* of the thing, and then to *explain* the thing by replacing it by its history." Maritain, *op. cit.*, p. 45. Italics author's.

and live well together with the minimum of tension. Marxism, though, avows the release of blind forces—its own history is the best proof of that.

> The tragedy of Marxism is above all manifest in the interior failure to which its first realizations have led of themselves in Russia, and the inner conflicts it cannot help engendering. The successive waves of terrorism in the Soviet Republics have, from this point of view, an extraordinary significance for the philosopher: communism which is a sort of economic theocracy, requires an extremely rigorous and tense discipline. But it can only seek this discipline through *external methods* of pedagogy and constraint. Now, without some sort of *interior* ethics, implying and respecting the aspiration of the soul and of the person, without a vivid faith which communicates its fervour to the minds of people, no strong social discipline is possible. And thus is inevitable the internal conflict between an anarchy of passions, ambitions, individual energies, employing no matter what means—an anarchy, continually reborn—and an "order" which ignores the very principle of order.[75]

[75] Maritain, J., *op. cit.*, pp. 80–81. Italics author's.

CHAPTER IV

A CRITIQUE (CONTINUED)

B. OF TRUTH OF RACE

1. *Contrasts*

The best way to approach National Socialism in our criticism of it is to regard it as "a tragic opposition between life and intelligence."[1] It is reason which decapitates reason in Marxist materialism; it is irrational instinct or biological mysticism which administers the blow in National Socialism. We have noted previously that National Socialism was essentially a dynamic movement in which theory followed rather than preceded events.[2] But while in Marxism man is forced to subject himself, his mind, his life, not to human but to technical exigencies, in National Socialism he grovels in the organic and biological.

> When all other standards have been unmasked by scepticism of all doctrines, reason itself is robbed of its force. The anti-intellectual attitude of dynamism is not mere chance but the necessary outcome of an entire absence of standards. Man, it holds, is not a logical being; not a creature guided by reason or intelligence, but a creature following his instincts and impulses, like any other animal. Consequently reason cannot provide a basis for a social order or a political system. The barbaric element which reformist Socialism and moderate Marxism would place in safe custody under lock and key, is the one element that can change a social order. That is why revolutionary direct action has won the day against the responsible, non-revolutionary Socialism of the working classes, just as it has violently eliminated the middle class itself as the ruling class. Hostility to the things of the spirit, indifference to truth, indifference to the ethical conceptions of morality, honor and equity—all the things that can arouse the indignation of the ordi-

[1] Maritain, J., *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 4.

[2] Chapter II, p. 52.

> nary citizen of Germany and abroad against certain National Socialist measures—are not excrescences but the logical and inevitable outcome of the National Socialist philosophy of violence. This hostility to the intellect, to individualism and personality, to pure science and art, is not the arbitrary invention of a particularly vicious system of racial philosophy, but the logical outcome of the political system of revolutionary direct action with violence as its one and only historic motor.[3]

With the National Socialist insistence on life and vitality as such Thomism would not quarrel. But when the *whole* life of man is staked out on the animal level Thomistic thought must draw back not only in disgust but in horror. That reaction, though, is not an unreal one implying a denial or even a disregard of the sensitive or vegetative life of man. True wisdom takes issue with the brutality—in the full sense of the word—of National Socialism because it is short-sighted rather than far-sighted.

> The world of elementary values in nature, of physical courage, of simplicity, no matter if brutal and gross; of that sort of natural, if cynical candour by which the animal is not ashamed to exist nor has need to justify existence; the world of primitive feelings, of pacts such as exist even in the horde, of the instinct of physical solidarity such as exists among robbers, of the need of being together and feeling together such as exists even in the great herds on the prairies—this world can indeed be disciplined by true wisdom, which does not despise it and which turns it towards transformations of the spirit.[4]

St. Thomas was well aware of the integral man. Because he was, he set for himself a fourfold consideration in his study: (1) of reason in which man has something in common with the angels; (2) of the sensitive powers in which man has something in common with the animals; (3) of the natural powers in which man has something in common with vegetative being; (4) of his body

[3] Rauschning, H., *The Revolution of Nihilism* (New York: Alliance Book Co., 1939), p. 28.

[4] Maritain, J., *op. cit.*, pp. 14, 15.

in which man has something in common with inanimate creation.[5] We have already had an indication[6] of how he orders all these forces in terms of life and life's activity. The key to the solution is a sentence which follows immediately the Thomistic analysis of the powers of man. "Ratio autem in homine habet locum dominantis, et non subjecti dominio."[7]

National Socialism on the contrary is a betrayal of man. It may be said in general that at the back of the whole tactics and method of propaganda of National Socialism there is a complete contempt of humanity; the whole system is based on taking men as they are and pandering to their weakness and bestiality. Thomism defines man as a rational animal and is concerned with both words in the definition; the perversion of National Socialism is to have emphasized and concentrated on animal– and this of set purpose by its leaders. That perversion is all the more complete in that there are some among those leaders who, while they suggest and exalt irrational impulses, keep them under rational control and guidance.

> The exploitation of envy and ill-will, of the lowest human instincts, the sowing of dissension between opponents, and the appeal to their ignoble qualities and notorious weaknesses have thus far unfailingly helped National Socialism to success, incidentally destroying the basis of a general sense of morality which was weak to begin with.[8]

Of set purpose National Socialism takes these irrational impulses—proportionally good as St. Thomas would have us understand—and not only pushes them to the fore out of all proportion but advances them as the sole norm of truth, life, and society. The ultimates, to the extent of being a religion, are Blood, Race and Soil.

[5] "Est autem in homine quattuor considerare, scilicet, rationem, secundum quam convenit cum angelis; vires sensitivas, secundum quas convenit cum animalibus; vires naturales secundum quas convenit cum plantas; et ipsum corpus, secundum quod convenit cum rebus inanimatis." *S. T.*, I, q. 96, a. 2. corpus.

[6] Chapter I, pp. 4–5.

[7] *S. T.*, I, q. 96, a. 2.

[8] Rauschning, H., *op. cit.*, p. 47.

> For the best and deepest men of today religion is no longer dogma, no longer denomination; the divine secret reveals itself to us in the notions of Blood, Race, and Soil which are from everlasting to everlasting. The man who disavows these values or seeks to impair their eternal working disavows life and therefore God who is the source of life. Our religion would not be, if our Blood were not . . .[9]

What prevents statements of the above nature from being utterly absurd is the kernel of reality and truth they contain. Again it is a case of St. Thomas' contention: there is no thought so false that it does not have some element of truth—falsity is not only the lack of truth, it is its very corruption.[10] Because he is a composite substance the physical component of man—his body—is essential to him. But it is untrue and disastrous to man to fix him on the physical level.[11]

Of a part with such a low estimate are the passions which National Socialism not only releases but exalts. The movement has its motive power in a blind faith [12] rooted in emotion.[13] This is achieved through drill to the point of blind obedience, through ceaseless propaganda,[14] through hatred and even hysteria.[15] "The

[9] *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, Feb. 22, 1934, quoted in Micklem, *National Socialism and the Roman Catholic Church*, p. 22.

[10] Chapter I, p. 19. Cfr. *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 172, a. 6; *De Ver.*, q. 18, a. 6.

[11] "Unde oportet quod id quod est superioris potentiae, scilicet rationis, eis imprimatur, et ipsa sigillatio rationis inferioribus viribus formaliter perficit virtutes morales." *De Ver.*, q. 24, a. 4 ad 9.

[12] Hitler, A., *Mein Kampf*, p. 229. "But in mankind, too, they are characteristics of only a few people or rather races according to the measure in which they originate from their feelings"; cfr. pp. 408–409 for another expression of same attitude.

[13] "The great mass of a people consists neither of professors nor of diplomats. The small abstract knowledge it possesses directs its sentiments rather to the world of feeling. In this is rooted either its negative or positive attitude." Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 467.

[14] "But least of all did one understand the very primary condition for all propagandistic activity as a whole: namely the subjectively biased attitude of propaganda towards the questions to be dealt with." Hitler, A., *op. cit.*, p. 236.

[15] Hitler, A., *op. cit.*; cfr. Appendix 517–559 for examples of handbills of meetings of the National Socialist Party and their appeal to hatred.

myth of the nation" says one who knows the movement intimately,

> is the trick by means of which the masses can be kept in a state of exaltation and opened to influence by suggestion at any time. The solemn rite in which at meetings the masses are celebrated as the united nation is the technical preparation for making them ready for inflammatory slogans. In this atmosphere speeches addressed never to the intelligence but only to the subconscious instincts have their success. This alone explains the character of these speeches, which call forth either ecstatic enthusiasm or ecstatic fury. . . . Anyone who has had experience of the way in which a special style of ecstatic oratory is cultivated, even by the pettiest officials of the party, will realize the deeper purpose of this style with its calculated effect on the masses.[16]

For St. Thomas, the primacy of the intellectual soul of man once established, there is required the following of the implications of that supremacy into the life of the whole man. The irrational factors of man's vegetative and sensitive life are similar to the same forces in plant and animal creation; but in man himself the light of reason suffuses them and in its glow they reflect a unique character in serving the integral life of man the rational animal.

2. *Complete Man*

Before going further in indicating the development of St. Thomas' thought along this line, it might be well to outline his schema of the whole man.

A. On the purely *organic* level there is (a) the ability to reproduce or hand down the biological life which was received through the process of generation; (b) the ability to metabolize or convert inert matter into protoplasm; (c) the ability to grow, resulting in physical maturation of the body.

B. On the *organico-mental* level there are (a) the somesthetic, olfactory, gustatory, auditory and visual abilities; (b) *sensus communis*, which enables us to synthesize the data of the external senses into perceptual

[16] Rauschning, H., *op. cit.*, p. 84.

wholes; (c) imagination, or the power of representing objects in their absence; (d) instinct, through which we are able to discriminate between the things that are useful and those that are harmful to the organism; (e) memorial ability, which revives events of past experience; (f) the power of locomotion, which makes behavioristic movements possible.

C. On the *rational* level there is (a) intellect, which forms concepts, judgments, and inferences; and (b) will, which is the responsible agent for volition, choice, determining tendencies, and controls.[17]

Certainly even this mere schema of Thomistic teaching on the nature of man should free it from the reproach of over-simplification and over-refined intellectualism.

But St. Thomas still insists on the primacy of mind. Life is evidenced above all in motion and knowledge.[18] And in both spheres, mind—and by consequence mind's quest truth—is in control for man. There is a level of sensitive knowledge in man but unlike the animal he does not remain on that level. In him sensitive knowledge precedes and serves intellectual knowledge.

> In our knowledge there are two things to be considered. First intellectual knowledge in some degree arises from sensible knowledge; and because sense has singular and individual things for its object and intellect has the universal for its object, it follows that our knowledge of the former comes before our knowledge of the latter. Secondly, we must consider that our intellect proceeds from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality. And every power thus proceeding from potentiality to actuality comes first to an incomplete act. . . . We must therefore conclude that knowledge of the singular is prior as regards us to knowledge of the universal; just as sensible knowledge is prior to intellectual knowledge.[19]

[17] Brennan, R., *General Psychology* (New York: Macmillan, 1937), p. 431; cfr. *Q. D. De Anima*, quaestio unica, a. 13 of which this is a digest.

[18] "Vita maxime manifestatur duplici opere, scilicet, cognitionis et motus." *S. T.*, I, 75, 1.

[19] ". . . cognitione nostri intellectus duo oportet considerare. Primo quidem, quod cognitio intellectiva aliquo modo a sensitiva primordium sumit. Et quia sensus est singularium, intellectus autem universalium; necesse est quod cognitio singularium quoad nos prior sit quam universalium cognitio. Secundo oportet considerare quod intellectus noster de potentia in actum procedit. Omne autem quod procedit de potentia in actum, prius pervenit ad actum incompletum. . . . Est ergo dicendum quod cognitio singularium est prior quoad nos quam cognitio universalium, sicut cognitio sensitiva, quam cognitio intellectiva." *S. T.*, I, q. 85, a. 3.

So, too, on the level of the sensitive appetites St. Thomas is not content with tracing their activity to natural instinct, he sets forward also their direction by reason.[20]

> In man the sensitive appetites are naturally moved by particular reason. But this same particular reason is naturally guided and moved according to universal reason, since in syllogistic matters particular conclusions are drawn from universal propositions. Accordingly, it is clear that universal reason directs the sensitive appetites, which are divided into concupiscible and irascible; and these appetites obey it. But, because to draw particular conclusions from universal principles is not the work of the intellect, as such, but of reason, therefore the irascible and concupiscible appetites are said to obey reason rather than to obey intellect. Anyone can experience this in himself; for by applying certain universal considerations, anger or fear or the like may be modified or excited.[21]

[20] ". . . vires sensitivae dupliciter possunt considerari: uno modo secundum quod operantur ex instinctu naturae; alio modo secundum quod operantur ex imperio rationis." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 50, a. 3; ". . . irascibilis et concupiscibilis secundum se consideratae prout sunt partes appetitus sensitivi, communes sunt nobis et brutis; sed secundum quod sunt rationales per participationem, ut obedientes rationi sic sunt propriae hominis; et hoc modo possunt esse subjectum virtutis humanae." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 56, a. 1 ad 1; ". . . rationale per participationem, non solum est irascibile et concupiscibile, sed omnino appetitivum, ut dicitur: quia 'omnis appetitus obedit rationi.'" *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 58, a. 4 ad 3; cfr. II *Sent.*: d. 18, q. 2, a. 3 ad 4.

[21] "Unde ab ea natus est moveri in homine appetitus sensitivus. Ipsa autem ratio particularis nata est moveri et dirigi in homine secundum rationem universalem; unde in syllogisticis ex universalibus propositionibus concluduntur conclusiones singulares. Et ideo patet quod ratio universalis imperat appetitui sensitivo, qui distinguitur per concupiscibilem et irascibilem, et hic appetitus est ei obediens. Et quia deducere universalia principia in conclusiones singulares, non est opus simplicis intellectus, sed

Clearly, then, though there is a point of contact between Thomism and National Socialism in their agreement on the reality and vitality of man's animal nature, they are irreconcilable in fixing its worth. The preceding has indicated why this is so. And this fundamental disagreement reveals itself ever more and more. One constantly and consistently emphasizes the life of the mind and the quest for truth; the other yields, willingly or unwillingly, by the force of its position to irrational forces and brutality.

3. *God, Man and Society*

We can judge the extent of the cleavage by comparing, as we did in the preceding chapter on Marxism, the ideals of God, man and society as Thomism would have them and as National Socialism would have them. The general trend of thought, apart from particular arguments, should amply serve to prove the superiority of one over the other. In Thomism we find a philosophy so realistic and extensive that it can admit the irrational, analyze its worth, and assign its strength without surrendering to it. In National Socialism, on the other hand, only the cold surrender to the irrational can explain its excesses. National Socialism as a philosophical system "amounts to the belief that the use of violence in a supreme effort liberates creative moral forces in human society which lead to social and national renewal." [22]

Now, as we did comparing Thomism and Marxism, we can further emphasize the contrast between Thomism and National Socialism in their ideas of God, man and society. National Socialism is a philosophy of violence and we can expect to see that note reflected even in the above ideas. The over-all note of Thomism in the same ideas is briefly and admirably summed up in one of St. Thomas' commentaries. It is that of peace and order. Peace, he holds, is the tranquility of order. Order, moreover, is the proportionate and apt disposition of like and unlike and there is peace where all holds its proper place. First of all,

rationis; ideo irascibilis et concupiscibilis magis dicuntur obedire rationi quam intellectui. Hoc etiam quilibet experiri potest in seipso; applicando enim aliquas universales considerationes, mitigatur, ira, aut timor, aut aliquid hujusmodi, vel etiam instigatur." *S. T.*, I, q. 81, a. 3.

[22] Rauschning, H., *op. cit.*, pp. 27–28.

then, the mind of man should be subject to God. Then the lower powers and activities common to ourselves and animals must be subject to man, because by reason man is superior to the animals. Finally there should be peace between man and man for complete order.[23] From what we have said so far of National Socialism we may hope to find out what "creative moral forces" it liberates. At the same time, in the light of the above quotation, the superiority of the Thomistic life of reason should be revealed in contrast.

For St. Thomas reason—here again we repeat a previous theme [24]—discovers and demands God as the root and source of intelligibility. Life and non-life, mind and matter lead back to Supreme Life and Supreme Mind. But should there be any lack of clarity and injustice to St. Thomas' thought in making this point, the fault is in the present exponent. For that thought itself shows such balance and breadth, such appreciation of identity and diversity, such a hierarchical order, that intelligibility is established without sacrificing the diversity and independence of creatures, and least of all without the least hint or danger of identity of all in the One.

Immateriality is the key. The advance and perfection of material creatures through the non-living, into the living, on to the intelligent is on the basis of immateriality.[25] Thus we come to man whose unique life and activity demands an immaterial mind in an immaterial soul. But there we cannot stop.[26] True, because man has a rational soul united to a corporeal body, he is by the very fact of that union placed at the highest degree of bodily natures. But to preserve proportion in the order of nature,

[23] "Pax est tranquilitas ordinis. Ordo autem est parium dispariumque sua loca cuique tribuens dispositio. Ergo pax est in hoc quod omnes teneant sua loca. Unde debet mens hominis primo Deo subjecta esse. Secundo motus et vires inferiores, quae sunt nobis et brutis communes, subjecta esse homini; per rationem enim homo praeest animalibus. . . . Tertio ut homo pacem habet ad alios, quia sic totaliter erit ordinatus." *In Matthaeum*, cap. 5.

[24] Chapter I, pp. 20–22.

[25] IV *C. G.*, II; cfr. Chapter I, pp. 4–5.

[26] "Inter alias vero intellectuales substantias humanae animae infimum gradum habent." III *C. G.*, 18.

a place must be reserved for intellectual creatures not united to bodies.[27] Even here we cannot stop. In the angels understanding and being, mind and life, are not the same thing. So once more we must ascend to the Being in whom mind and life are one and the same—who because He is supremely immaterial is supreme Mind.[28] The perfection of man points to his imperfection; the mind that lifts him above the rest of material creatures points to his subordination and completion over and above himself.[29]

So man must not only go out of the material: he must go out of himself to find himself. Peace is the tranquility of order. The mind, which for St. Thomas makes man so superior to the rest of material creatures, in the next breath notifies him of dependence. The intellect in whose light matter becomes intelligible and pliant does not enforce but rather discovers intelligibility. In discovering that intelligibility man comes face to face with its implication. That is why St. Thomas can so reasonably and so naturally come to the awareness of supreme Intelligence which, as he shows, is the beginning and end of all intelligibility.[30] "First of all then the mind of man should be subject to God."

God is also invoked by National Socialism. Now the associations attached to the word God in the culture of the West are part of the Christian tradition in which St. Thomas lived and worked and to which he contributed so much. That tradition cannot but recoil from the blasphemous use of the name of God in National Socialism. Given its philosophy, though, nothing more could have been expected.

The exponents of National Socialism have expended all their

[27] "Natura superior in suo infimo contingit naturam inferiorem in ejus supremo. Natura autem intellectualis est superior corporali. Attingit autem eam secundum aliquam partem sui, quae est anima intellectiva. Oportet igitur quod, sicut corpus perfectum per animam intellectivam est supremus in genere corporum, ita anima intellectiva, quae unitur corpori, sit infima in genere substantiarum intellectualium. Sunt igitur aliquae substantiae intellectuales non unitae corporibus, superiores secundum naturae ordinem anima." II *C. G.*, 91.

[28] "Unde cum Deus sit in summo immaterialitate sequitur quod ipse sit in summo cognitionis." *S. T.*, I, q. 14, a. 1.

[29] Cfr. Chapter I, pp. 6–8.

[30] I *Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2; cfr. Chapter I, p. 20.

energies to rationalize the irrational. "To rationalize the irrational"—such a phrase bespeaks horrible perversity. Alone of all material creation man has mind and when by inversion that mind is placed at the service of irrational forces instead of in command of them the repercussion reveals itself up to the most exalted of ideas—the idea of God.

> God is invoked, but only in virtue of the testimony, if I may say so, of these elementary fibres and of the desire of nature written in the biological elements of the human being; and He . . . is invoked against the God of the spirit, of intelligence and love—excluding and hating this God. What an extraordinary spiritual phenomenon this is: people believing in God, and yet do not know God. The idea of God is affirmed, and at the same time disfigured and perverted. A God who will end by being identified with an invisible force at work in the blood, is set up against transcendent Being.[31]

Does this seem exaggerated? Well, previously[32] we have already quoted an authoritative exponent of National Socialism to the effect that "for the best and deepest men of today religion is no longer dogma, no longer denomination; the divine secret reveals itself to us in the notions of Blood, Race and Soil which are from everlasting to everlasting." In 1936 in an article "Conflict of the world views, the philosophical basis of the National Socialist programme," published simultaneously in two official Party organs, the following appeared:

> The supreme value that we serve is the People; hence for us the service of the People is the service of God. We believe and know that there is a God who has made our People. There is an ultimate and unfathomable meaning of all existence, call it destiny, original force or God—all these words mean the same thing. Every philosophy implies an ultimate decision before God. This decision faces us all as we are bound by the unbreakable fellowship of destiny, of history, of country, and before all, by common blood.[33]

[31] Maritain, J., *op. cit.*, p. 15.

[32] Above, p. 94.

[33] *Der Frankfurter Student* and *Der Hessische Adakemische Beobachter*, quoted in Micklem, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

There are sentences in the above such as "Every philosophy implies an ultimate decision before God," with which Thomism could hardly take exception. But the process which identifies God with the racial soul,[34] with irrational factors in man, concludes to a God as irrational as the all-important notions in National Socialist thought. That is what is meant by the horrible perversity of the phrase—"to rationalize the irrational." In St. Thomas all things, man included, is subject to God. In National Socialism, not only is God subject to man, worse, he is the summary of the exaltation of the irrational.

Coming now to the idea of man, again and again we have seen how St. Thomas evaluates man's worth and importance precisely because he is an intelligent being.[35] Both Thomism and National Socialism agree on the irrational factors within man. After that, though, agreement ceases. For St. Thomas reason takes command, and that part of man common to himself and the brute animals is guided not by blind instinct but by the control of mind.[36] Here again the breadth and balance of St. Thomas is evident. In the previous chapter we indicated how aware St. Thomas was of material causality and yet how he avoided the extremism of Marxism in the application of that causality. Now again St. Thomas is just as conscious as National Socialism of the lower powers of man. As a matter of fact to protect the independence of those forces St. Thomas makes a distinction between a control despotic or persuasive depending on their nature.[37] But

[34] Cfr. Chapter II, pp. 54–55.

[35] In the light of what is to follow we might quote this apt summary of St. Thomas: "Anima autem quae est in plantis, habet infimum gradum inter potentias animae; unde ab ea denominatur, cum dicitur nutritiva vel vegetabilis. Anima autem bruti pertingit ad altiorem gradum, scilicet, qui est sensus; unde ipsa anima vocatur sensitiva, vel quandoque etiam sensus. Sed anima humana pertingit ad altissimum gradum qui est inter potentias animae, et ex hoc denominatur; unde dicitur intellectiva, et quandoque etiam intellectus, et similiter mens; inquantum scilicet ex ipsa nata est effluere talis potentia, quia est sibi proprium prae aliis animabus." *De Ver.*, q. X, a. 1.

[36] Cfr. no. 20 above.

[37] ". . . alia ratione regitur corpus ab anima, et irascibilis et concupiscibilis a ratione. Corpus enim ad nutum obedit animae absque contradictione in his in quibus natum est ab anima moveri. Unde Philosophus dicit (Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1254b, 3) quod 'anima regit corpus despotico principatu,' id est, sicut dominus servum, et ideo totus motus corporis refertur ad animam; et propter hoc in corpore non est virtus, sed solum in anima. Sed irascibilis et concupiscibilis non obediunt ad nutum ratione; sed habet proprios motus suos, quibus interdum rationi repugnant: unde Philosophus (Aristotle, Metaphysics, 1254b, 4) dicit quod 'ratio regit irascibilem et concupiscibilem principatu politico' quo, scilicet, reguntur liberi, qui habent in aliquibus propriam voluntatem." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 56, a. 4 ad 3.

always as inferior under superior they follow reason and reason's behest, the while retaining their own function.[38] National Socialism can be called, "the philosophy of violence," because the violence it does the dignity of men reflects itself in action. St. Thomas extols peace, for "the lower powers and activities common to ourselves and animals must be subject to man, because by reason man is superior to the animals."

Finally, what has so far been said evidently points to a profound disagreement between Thomism and National Socialism in their theories of the nature of society. More particularly, though, the comparison between the two in this case can be emphasized because of St. Thomas' teaching on the supremacy of mind and mind's object. The ultimate end of humanity, as of the individual, is contemplation. And this is true of man's life on earth, insofar as such a life is feasible.[39] Intelligence constitutes man's most precious possession and for society thinkers occupy the first place in the ranks of men. Out of the superabundance of their contemplative life these are in a position to pass on their light to others, to be "illuminators" of humanity.[40]

This does not imply that St. Thomas' thought is of such tenuous refinement that men of affairs or practical men are to be elimi-

[38] ". . . naturaliter appetitus inferior sequitur motum appetitus superioris, nisi aliquid repugnet. Et ideo non potest totaliter deficere motus irae in appetitu sensitivo, nisi per substractionem, vel delibitatem voluntarii motus. Et ideo ex consequenti etiam defectus passionis irae vitiosus est, sicut et, defectus voluntarii motus ad puniendum secundum judicium rationis." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 158, a. 8.

[39] ". . . sicut bonum unius consistit in actione et contemplatione; ita et bonum multitudinis secundum quod contingit multitudinem contemplationi vacare." III *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, sol. 1 ad 2.

[40] *Ibidem.*

nated or even disregarded in human society. They have a place, indeed an important place, and their worth is admitted, but because of the supremacy of mind, they must look for direction to men of intellectual worth.[41] Just as disorder in the individual occurs if the lower powers take precedence over the mind, so, too, there is disorder in human society if intellectual pre-eminence is disregarded.[42]

The perversion of National Socialism is, then, to take man and root his life, his activities and his goal in the irrational—in the sensual and even vegetative. So we might expect that as St. Thomas looks to intellectual leadership in the guidance of society, National Socialism cannot but demand the perfection of the brutal and unreasoning in its leaders. The development of the elite of National Socialism has but one result—the individual emerges from his years of training as a splendid animal thinking only of Hitlerism and possessing the technical equipment for furthering the cause. The degradation of human society consequent on this training reveals itself in extremes of brutality and violence, of hatred, vengeance, envy, ill-will, licentiousness, robbery. We catalog these as vices but it must be remembered they are virtues in the National Socialist scheme. No wonder "all these motives and methods have set in motion a ruin of the national character on a scale hitherto unimaginable, which must inevitably recoil in the end on the ruling elite themselves."[43]

It might be alleged that National Socialism with its professed concern for inculcating honor and nobility in its members coincides more with the virtuous life of Thomism than does Marxism

[41] "Virtus autem intellectiva de se est ordinativa et regitiva: unde videmus quod, quando conjunguntur in eodem, virtus operativa sequitur regimen intellectivae virtutis; sicut in homine videmus quod ad imperium voluntatis moventur membra. Idem etiam apparet si in diversis existant: nam illi homines qui excedunt in virtute operativa, oportet quod dirigantur ab illis qui in virtute intellectiva excedunt." III *C. G.*, 78.

[42] "Sicut autem in operibus unius hominis ex hoc inordinatio provenit quod intellectus sensualem virtutem sequitur . . . ita et in regimine humano inordinatio provenit ex eo quod non propter intellectus praeeminentiam aliquis praeest, sed vel robore corporali dominium sibi usurpat, vel propter sensualem affectionem aliquis ad regendum praeficitur." III *C. G.*, 81.

[43] Rauschning, H., *op. cit.*, p. 47.

which sacrifices man to a productive society. But one is as irreconcilable with Thomism as the other. The original error of National Socialism in subordinating the life of mind to animal and physical life carries over and reveals itself in a society to whose inevitable outcome St. Thomas has pointed. Again we repeat with him that just as disorder in the individual occurs if the lower powers take precedence over the mind, so, too, there is disorder in human society if intellectual pre-eminence is disregarded.[44]

If further emphasis be needed, we might take an outstanding example of National Socialist thought and legislation in the practical sphere which startlingly indicates this brutalizing of man in society. It is the application of the laws of breeding to the whole German nation. These laws, incidently, were advanced and drawn up by a former veterinary, Darre, the Minister of Agriculture. They propose the establishment of *Zuchtwarten* (offices of breeding control) whose duty it would be to keep records of breeding control) whose duty it would be to keep records of German breeding. By the mating of the best German blood—and we have seen what blood means in National Socialist thought—and by compulsory sterilization of the unfit the perfect society is to be realized. If there is any logic in the glorification of irrational instinct, here it is.

The irrational mysticism of National Socialism reveals itself again in its further program of action. "The inclination of Western civilization to anarchy," implicit, as we have seen, in its present thought, is pushed to violent conclusion in National Socialism. On a stupendous wave of wild mass emotion it has consumed the institutions of private property, and all the elements of culture in its own society. Not content with this destruction, the disorder and anarchy which it conceives as the life of man, has impelled it to world revolution, the "eternal war" many of its leaders consider to be the future condition of human society. We cannot but compare this ultimate expression of creation by destruction with St. Thomas' final end of peace and order between man and man as the complete expression of human society.

In summary, once again to enforce the contrast between Tho-

[44] Above, no. 42.

mism and National Socialism, we repeat St. Thomas: Peace is the tranquility of order. Order, moreover, is the proportionate and apt disposition of like and unlike and there is peace where all holds its proper place. First of all, then, the mind of man should be subject to God. Then the lower powers and activities common to ourselves and animals must be subject to man, because by reason man is superior to the animals. Finally, there should be peace between man and man for complete order.[45] We have indicated, we hope, the superiority of Thomism to National Socialism in achieving the tranquility of order wherein man is at peace with God, himself and his fellow men. The measure and goal of that tranquility is St. Thomas' ideal of knowledge and truth.

C. Of Truth of Man

1. *Humanistic Summary*

Our final evaluation—that of Humanism—demands a quite particular approach. There are in Humanism the extremes of thought characteristic of Marxism and National Socialism, but these extremes are generally carefully masked when Humanism comes to enunciation or action. Concepts and words, God, truth, justice, man, enriched by centuries of Christian thought, are ever on the lips of Humanists. But by its own process Humanism has emptied those ideas of their original content. We will find much of the current materialism and appeal to the irrational revealing itself just as clearly in Humanism as in Marxism and National Socialism in spite of surface indications to the contrary. Humanism is, as we previously remarked, in great measure Anglo-Saxon; and nowhere is this racial trait more evident than in the sentimentality with which it enunciates the irrational and the respectability with which it clothes the vicious. That is why we must be on our guard; it retains the overtones of our thought while at the same time offering in reality perversions of that thought.

Humanism is what we might call the professedly respectable summary of the modern philosophy which we outlined in the

[45] Above, no. 23.

second chapter.[46] Its adherents, of course, disown the violence with which Marxism and National Socialism have taken elements of that thought and pushed them to their logical conclusion. Humanists appeal to the same elements, but in many cases they have neither the moral nor intellectual courage to apply them in their full strength. But that does not mean there is no kinship between the three systems of thought. There is a basic relationship which, among other things, we hope the present examination and criticism of Humanism will show.

As the summary of modern thought Humanism is of a piece with the principles, conclusions and spirit of that thought. In it we find the exaltation of the scientific method, the substitution of hypothesis for conclusion, and the adoption of the methods of particular sciences to arrive at general philosophical tenets.

Where is the quarrel with Humanism? Look at the fifteenth and last point of the Humanist Manifesto: "We assert that humanism will (a) affirm life rather than deny it; (b) seek to elicit the possibilities of life not flee from it."[47] In the light of all we have said about St. Thomas' thought that is eminently his ideal too. The affirmation of life and the eliciting of its possibilities—by that much Humanism and Thomism agree; the nature of that life and its complete realization—there the two are irreconcilable. But worthy of note before we go on to the details of the conflict is this fact: just as Thomism, even while criticizing, incorporated and complimented the best of Marxism and National Socialism, so, too, its censure of Humanism is sure enough and sympathetic enough to take exception not in terms of outright denial but of Humanism's weak lack of complete affirmation.

2. *Thomistic Divergence*

One of the fundamental defects of Humanism is as old as philosophy itself and it is one of which St. Thomas was very much aware. It is, in brief, the union of naive realism with absolute relativism. No doubt there are many nuances in the way this is presently expressed, but beneath them all lies this basic error.

[46] Chapter II, pp. 36–47.
[47] Cfr. Chapter II, p. 62.

Pragmatism and Instrumentalism, for example, in spite of all their supposed refinement, are but modern rephrasings of this very, very old mistake. St. Thomas summarized it in two sentences. "The first philosophers who delved into the nature of things thought there was nothing in the world besides the material. And because they saw that all bodies were changeable and because they thought them to be in a continual flux they concluded that we cannot have any certitude of the truth of things."[48] For such thinkers the theory of the absolute "flux" of things and of the impossibility of affirming unchanging truth was a necessary consequence of their materialism.[49]

This criticism by St. Thomas of earlier thinkers is just as applicable today to the modern thought of which Humanism is the summary. Indeed, the science and scientific method in which Humanism places so much confidence is far more advanced and far more productive than the crude science of the earlier Greek thinkers. The error, though, is not on the scientific level but on the philosophical level. And on that level Humanists are just as wrong as their predecessors.

To appreciate St. Thomas' criticism we must once again return to his teaching on the life of the mind and its quest—truth. For him the primitive thing in intellectual knowledge is a certain transparent identifying of mind with reality. This fact dictated the progress of his philosophic thought. On the one hand, it will consist in the ability to distinguish between the thing in itself and the conditions of its perception. On the other hand, it will mean distinguishing intelligence itself from material essences the conception of which actualizes it. In this twofold task—it is the contention of Thomism—modern philosophic thought has failed. The certitude of the Thomistic answer—and its worth—is based on St. Thomas' sure answers in the same twofold work. Those

[48] ". . . primi philosophi, qui de naturis rerum inquisiverunt putaverunt, nihil esse in mundo praeter corpus. Et quia videbant, omnia corpora nobilia esse et putabant ea in continuo fluxu esse, existimaverunt, quod nulla certitudo de rerum veritate haberi posset a nobis." *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 1.

[49] "Et ita cum res materialiter in anima ponerent, posuerunt omnem cognitionem animae materialem esse, non discernentes inter intellectum et sensum." *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 2.

answers are expressed in his teaching on the degrees of abstraction in knowledge and the immateriality of the mind.

In the first place St. Thomas obviated the confusion of modern thought by the distinction wherein the hierarchy of sciences is established. His teaching is but the explicit formulation of Aristotle's thought on the same subject.[50] Science, all science, has for its object, the matter with which it deals, being. But sciences differ according to the relation the intellect bears to the objects presented to it. More than that, the speculative sciences are divided according as the mind views the objects presented to it as variously removed from conditions of matter and motion.[51] For instance, three men may consider a rainbow differently. One may be interested in its physical components—the number of colors, the cause of their refraction, the weather conditions required for its appearance, etc. Another is preoccupied with the angle of curvature and its mathematical relations. Still another will look

[50] Cp. *Anal. Post.* I, 28, 87a 38-87b 4; *Phys.* II, 2, 193b 23-194b 15; *De Anima* I, 1, 403a 25-403b 19.

[51] "Quaedam igitur sunt speculabilium quae dependent a materia secundum esse quia non nisi in materia esse possunt; et haec distinguuntur, quia dependent quaedam a materia secundum esse et intellectum, sicut illa in quorum definitione ponitur materia sensibilis: unde sine materia sensibili intelligi non possunt: ut in definitione hominis oportet accipere carnem et ossa; et de his est physica, sive scientia naturalis. Quaedam vero sunt quae quamvis dependeant a materia secundum esse, non tamen secundum intellectum, quia in eorum definitionibus non ponitur materia sensibilis, ut linea et numerus; et de his est mathematica. Quaedam vero sunt speculabilia quae non dependent a materia secundum esse, quia sine materia esse possunt: sive numquam sint in materia, sicut Deus et angelus, sive in quibusdam sint in materia, et in quibusdam non, ut substantia, qualitas, potentia et actus, unum et multa et hujusmodi; de quibus omnibus est theologia, idest divina scientia, qui praecipuum cognitorum in ea est Deus. Alio nomine dicitur metaphysica, idest transphysica, quia post physicam discenda occurrit nobis, quibus ex sensibilibus competit in insensibilia devenire. Dicitur etiam philosophia prima, inquantum scientiae aliae ab ea principia sua accipientes eam sequuntur. Non est autem possibile quod sint aliquae res quae secundum intellectum dependeant a materia, et non secundum esse: quia intellectus quantum est de se, immaterialis est: et ideo non est quartum genus philosophiae praeter praedicta." *In De Trin.*, q. 5, a. 1.

at it, not in its physical manifestation, nor in its mathematical curvature, but in its character as an existing thing.

These three men *know* the same thing. But in each case they *know* it differently. In each case there is scientific knowledge but in each case the knowledge is different. Moreover, there is a progressive advancement of knowledge from the physical to the mathematical to the metaphysical. That is what Thomism means by degrees of knowledge dependent on the way the mind views the objects presented to it as variously removed from matter and motion.[52] Furthermore, with the progression of knowledge there is not disjunction but continuity. Too, the respective spheres of knowledge not only complement each other: they are dependent one on the other and there is a hierarchy of importance among them. Withal, each retains its own independence, its own subject matter and its own set of principles.

Now, one of the main reasons why knowledge and truth are what they are for modern philosophy is because that thought has hopelessly confused these three degrees of knowledge. The origin and history of that confusion would entail too long a digression here.[53] Its reality, though, needs no more than a casual examination of present thought to verify it. We have already indicated it in the very words of modern philosophers.[54] The consequence has been a belittlement of true wisdom and an inversion of true science.

In the last two centuries science has advanced far and preoccupied human thought more and more. Eminently successful it assumed to answer even ultimate questions. First the method of experiment achieved such splendid results that it begot a crudely materialistic outlook on all reality. Only what we can see and

[52] Cfr. Maritain, J., *A Preface to Metaphysics* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939), pp. 78–86.

[53] Cfr. Gilson, E., *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribners, 1937), Chapters 2 and 3; Maritain, J., *Science and Wisdom* (New York: Scribners, 1940), Part One; Maritain, J., "The Conflict of Methods at the End of the Middle Ages," *The Thomist*, Vol. III, p. 4, October, 1941, pp. 527–538; Maritain, J., "Science, Philosophy and Faith," pp. 162–183; Adler, M. J., "God and the Professors," *Science, Philosophy and Religion* (A Symposium), New York, 1941, pp. 120–138.

[54] Chapter II, pp. 38–40.

touch is of concern, it said. Then that same method led still further and eventually demanded another evaluation—this time mathematical. The physical theory concludes that since the physical or material is real and the atom and laws of natural phenomena are the ultimate irreducibles, metaphysics is impossible because it does not deal with the empirical or the tangible. The mathematical theory, on the other hand, rules out metaphysics only indirectly; though admitting the need of a higher science it rests satisfied with the demand that this be ordinative.

But the fault is not all on the side of the scientists. They wish to synthesize and order their finding, and if they are guilty of the abuse of the scientific method, it is because too often current philosophy cannot meet them on any common ground. "We shall find," says A. N. Whitehead,

> that since the time of Hume the fashionable scientific philosophy has been such as to deny the rationality of science. This conclusion lies upon the surface of Hume's philosophy. . . . If the cause in itself discloses no information as to the effect so that the first invention of it must be entirely arbitrary, it follows at once that science is impossible, except in the sense of establishing entirely arbitrary connections which are not warranted by anything intrinsic to the nature of either causes or effects . . . But scientific faith has risen to the occasion, and has tacitly removed the scientific mountain.[55]

That philosophy, confronted with the conquests of modern science, betrayed not only science but itself as well. Faced with the alternatives of (1) ignoring the new science; (2) consideration of its findings and an appreciation of its conclusions; (3) an attitude of subordination—it yielded to the last.

To substantiate this charge we have but to refer back to the treatment of current thought in the second chapter. There we saw how philosophers adopted the methods of science and how scientists left their own field to philosophize. Philosophers themselves criticized their own principles by the canons of science; scientists amplified their principles into philosophical conclusions.

[55] Whitehead, A. N., *Science and the Modern World* (Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 4.

Instead of the quest for truth philosophy rested satisfied with the formulation of hypotheses. Truth became, "the expedient in our way of thinking" and right, "the expedient in our way of acting." Thus Pragmatism contended. The success of natural science so intoxicated the philosophers that they identified knowledge with scientific knowledge. Methods and findings of particular sciences were exalted into absolute systems. In summary, as an example of the general spirit of this trend, we cite Professor Dewey:

> Science is not constituted by any particular body of subject matter. It is constituted by a method, a method of changing beliefs by means of tested inquiry as well as arriving at them. It is its glory, not its condemnation, that its subject matter or belief develops as the method improves. There is no special subject matter or belief that is sacrosanct. The identification of science with a particular set of beliefs and ideas is itself a holdover of ancient and still current dogmatic habits of thought which are opposed to science in its actuality—and which science is undermining.[56]

But is "science undermining"? Compare with this St. Thomas' teaching on the degrees of knowledge. In his scheme all the sciences—metaphysics is a science too—are a knowledge through causes. That is at once an explanation of their unity and diversity. Whereas the physical and mathematical sciences only tell us, "that a thing is," metaphysics tells us, "what the thing is."[57] Because metaphysics answers the "what" its object has universality and objectivity higher than any of the other sciences. Knowledge is for St. Thomas as we have insisted again and again an apprehension of reality so intimate that mind and object become, as it were, one. As the glance of intelligence is directed to the singular and contingent things apprehended by the sense, it can evoke the world of corporeal substances and their properties, or it can evoke the ideal world of extension and number, or

[56] Dewey, J., *A Common Faith*, pp. 38–39.

[57] "Sed inter omnes maxime dicimus scire illum, qui cognoscit quid est res, non autem qui scit quanta est, vel qualis et quid possit facere vel pati." *In III Meta.*, lect. 4.

again it can evoke the world of being as being and the principle of all reality.[58]

This last inspection is the science of metaphysics. For St. Thomas surely affirms not only the physical and mathematical sciences but the science of metaphysics as well. And not only does he affirm it, he places it at the summit of science. Metaphysics considers all things entitatively and is the science of the whole reality; the other sciences consider things quantitatively or qualitatively and are the sciences of partial reality. Metaphysics defends the principles upon which the various sciences are based, because all other principles are founded on the first principles which are the immediate and *per se* intuitively known principles of metaphysics.[59] Thus does Thomism avoid at once the betrayal of science and philosophy and the pitfall of the absolute relativism characteristic of modern thought.

A second general note of present philosophy is its naïve realism. Once again we appeal to the Manifesto. The first point holds that the universe is self-existing and not created; the second holds that man is a part of nature and has emerged as a result of a continuous process; the third holds that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected. In flat contradiction to all this is St. Thomas' proofs of the immateriality of the mind. Here in sum are the two contrasting answers to the second problem of a theory of knowledge—the distinction of intelligence itself from material essences the conception of which actualizes it.

3. *Humanistic Failure*

Really, though, Humanism's theory of mind has no place for such a problem. With the foundation it claims it does no more credit to man's mind than Marxist materialism or National Socialist irrationalism. Remember, modern philosophy obligates itself to keep within the bounds of modern science. And modern

[58] Cfr. Maritain, J., *The Degrees of Knowledge* (New York: Scribners, 1938); Veatch, H. B., "Some Suggestions on the Respective Spheres of Science and Philosophy," *The Thomist*, Vol. III, p. 2, April, 1941, pp. 177–216.

[59] Cfr. Casey, J., *The Primacy of Metaphysics* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1936).

science takes a low estimate of human intelligence. Whether present thought exalts the evolutionary findings of biology into the philosophical system of emergent evolution, or surrenders to psychology and considers mind's activity as "projections" of our lower nature, or whether it summarizes the two and offers a psychological, evolutionary and pragmatic account of reason, the result is the same—"the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected."

It is a curious irony that this surrender of philosophy to biology and psychology has reinforced the very irrationalism it seeks to combat.

> The irrational tidal wave is in reality the tragic wheel of rationalistic humanism; it reacts against a humanism of reason closed up in itself, but it does so by making man open to the powers from below, and shutting him off from higher communications and the spirit which liberates, and walling the creature up in the abyss of animal vitality.[60]

For if beliefs are primarily means of adaption to an environment, what becomes of truth, of even science itself? It can only be a specific form of biological adaption, differing in degree and not in kind from the rest of material life. Truth in any other sense, the absolute truth of the older thinkers, is meaningless in an evolving world.

Moreover, the analysis of the actual processes of the mind leads only—says Humanism—to the discovery of all the irrational elements that determine its thought and action, until amid the play of impulse, habit and emotion, all those tendencies now placed in the "unconscious," the voice of reason is quite drowned out. All our thoughts are but more or less concealed rationalizations, the reasons we invent for believing what we really think because of very different influences. Humanism uses fairer words and appeals to more exalted sentiments; but on its own premises it is so little removed from Marxist materialism and National Socialist irrationalism that its opposition to these is

[60] Maritain, J., *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 6.

more an emotional and aesthetic rebellion than an intelligent appraisal and rejection.

The plea of Humanists for a "fuller life," "a brave new world," "the affirmation of life rather than the denial of it," is answered by St. Thomas in a simple phrase. Life, he holds, adds something more than merely existing and intelligence adds something more than merely living.[61] Once again we repeat with him—the activity of the mind is life, the highest form of life. In the hierarchy of material things man stands apart from the rest. The difference which Humanism ascribes to an, "extreme thickening or packing," "thickened systems in space and time,"[62] St. Thomas finds in the immaterial activity of a spiritual soul. The background of that immateriality, its nature and its function we have already alleged.[63]

"Life," says Humanism, "is not a peculiar kind of entity or force, to be found in living things and which make them living. It is only a term for certain ways of acting and behaving of certain systems we call organisms. . . . Human purpose is a development of pattern in nature as this has attained the thickness and complications made possible by intelligence and memory. We are here at a very high level of evolutionary organization and we should expect the novel."[64] Life adds something more than merely existing, and intelligence adds something more than merely living, maintains Thomism in contrast. There is the difference. On the philosophical level St. Thomas does justice to philosophy and science and exalts the mind of man; on the scientific level Humanism compromises both, vitiates the truth of each and degrades the mind of man.

4. *God, Man, Society*

As is to be expected, when we carry over our comparison of Thomism and Humanism in their ideas of God, man and society

[61] ". . . vivere addit supra esse, et intelligere supra vivere." *De Ver.*, q. X, a. 1 ad 5.

[62] Sellars, R. W., *Religion Coming of Age* (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 223.

[63] Chapter I, pp. 9–12.

[64] Sellars, R. W., *op. cit.*, pp. 173–174, 224.

we find their principles carrying them farther and farther apart. Both theories are by reference to man, his place, his worth, and his end. The strength of Humanism, unfortunately, is confined to its adjectives; the worth of Thomism is in its principles.

Though Humanism shies from the militant atheism of Marxism and the identification of God and race of National Socialism there is nothing in its own scheme to demand this. God is not an independent reality; rather, as the deity of monotheism emerged, imagination "magnified the powers of this divine agent and made him superlative, omniscient and omnipotent: and on the other hand, it socialized and ethicized him. *In this fashion man projected into the universe his own sense of personal agency.*"[65] Such is the conclusion of Humanism behind the pretentious façade of modern science. We have but to go to that science to be convinced of the essential similarity of the appeal to the irrational, whether it be Marxism, National Socialism or Humanism which is doing the talking.

Definitely in the Humanistic spirit is Sigmund Freud a modern psychologist who has had profound influence on Humanists themselves. For him "scientific work is our only way to the knowledge of external reality."[66] When men speak of God, he says, this is but the subjective projection of "illusions . . . derived from men's wishes . . . fulfillments of the oldest, strongest and most insistent wishes of mankind"—the longing for parental protection.[67] Knowledge of God far from being the perfection of men's minds, is comparable to a diseased state of which they are, unfortunately, unaware. "Each of us behaves in some respect like the paranoiac, substituting a wish-fulfillment for some aspect of the world which is unbearable to him, and carrying this delusion through into reality. . . . Needless to say, no one who shares a delusion recognizes it as such."[68] Or, for another modern psychologist, "God is our own longing to which we pay divine honors."[69] "Psychologically, God always signifies the greatest value, hence the greatest sum of libido, the greatest intensity of life, the optimum of psychological activity."[70]

[65] Sellars, R. W., *op. cit.*, p. 159. Italics author's.
[66] Freud, S., *The Future of an Illusion*, p. 55.
[67] *Ibidem.*, pp. 52, 54–55.
[68] Freud, S., *Civilization and Its Discontents* (translated by J. Riviere) (London: Hogarth Press, 1930), p. 36.

We could, too, go to physics for the Great Mathematician or to biology for the god who is tending towards deity, or else organic with a progressing world. The god of the Humanists changes in direct proportion to the popularity of particular sciences. If we give more space to the god of psychology, it is because Humanists highly favor that science at present. In any event man is the measure of all things, god included.

Man is the measure in Thomism also. Because of the immaterial faculty of the mind he can know and recognize truth. By that much he is the norm of truth. But he *recognizes* it not *fabricates* it. The desperate expedients of Humanists to retain some shred of intelligibility for a universe they conjure in a welter of irrational forces reveal their insecurity. St. Thomas, to return once again to his teaching, is serenely confident of the intelligibility of that same universe—an intelligibility which mind discovers and which is guaranteed by supreme Mind, God.

> The intelligible species which our mind shares are reduced, as into a first cause, to some principle, intelligible in essence, namely God. But they proceed from that principle by the mediating forms of sensible and material things from which we acquire knowledge.[71]

Man is the measure for Humanism. "God is the first measure of all things"[72] for Thomism. Man is the source of knowledge and truth in Humanism. Given that man were not knowledge and truth would still remain in Thomism. But granting the impossible, and eliminating the mind of God and the mind of man,

[69] Jung, C. G., *Psychology of the Unconscious*, p. 52.
[70] Jung, C. G., *Psychological Types*, p. 222.
[71] ". . . species intelligibiles, quas participat noster intellectus, reducuntur sicut in primam causam, in aliquod principium per suam essentiam, intelligibile, scilicet, in Deum. Sed ab illo principio procedunt mediantibus formis rerum sensibilium et materialium a quibus scientiam colligimus." *S. T.*, I, q. 84, a. 4 ad 1.
[72] ". . . Deus omnium entium est prima mensura." III *C. G.*, 12.

then there would be absolutely no knowledge or truth.[73] Humanism denies the reality of God in the interest of man. Thomism affirms the reality of God in the completion of man. In the name of life Humanism ends in the irrational. In the name of life Thomism affirms the intelligible and supreme Intelligence.

Man, Humanism holds, is not only the measure but to an indefinable extent the master and creator of reality. This ideal, though, must be understood in the light of the third point of the Manifesto—"the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected." "The humanist," says an exponent, "takes the living, intelligent organism as the basic reality and follows psychology in revising the notion of mind from immaterial substance, or stream of ideas, to functional activities which are conscious."[74] Noteworthy in that explanation is the phrase "living, intelligent organism." Humanists also speak of the mind-body problem. But we would be mistaken if we thought because Humanism uses such expressions it has solved or is even aware of the basic problem it implies. Fundamentally, as we have pointed out, Humanism is a rephrasing of a very old materialism. It variously expresses its theory of the mind of man, but a common thread in all these explanations is an absolute disinclination—more a determination—to explain intelligence on any other terms than materialistic ones. To give weight to its pronouncements it speaks with the refined language of modern science, but, as its voice rises to give emphasis to its contentions, the harsh and raucous tone of a crude materialism is audible.

Thomism does not quarrel when Humanism speaks of man as part of nature. The recognition of that fact by Thomism should by now be quite clear. It is just as aware of material causality as Marxism.[75] Likewise it is as conscious of the lower powers of

[73] ". . . unde, etiam si intellectus humanus non esset, adhuc res diceretur verae in ordine ad intellectum divinum. Sed, si uterque intellectus, quod est impossibile, intelligeretur auferri, nullo modo veritatis ratio remaneret." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 2.

[74] Sellars, R. W., "In Defense of the Manifesto," *The New Humanism*, Nov.–Dec., 1933, p. 11.

[75] Chapter III.

man as National Socialism.[76] But unlike both it retains balance and proportion and never becomes over-conscious when treating these elements. So, too, Thomism is just as conscious of science and its contribution as Humanism. But, aware of the degrees of knowledge, it betrays neither its own method and thought nor scientific method and thought. The issue which Humanism makes, "which asks us to adhere to science and forsake philosophy or which in the name of philosophy requires a false apologetic for science"[77] is false.

Because that issue is false, Humanism is neither philosophy nor science and its theory on the nature of man and his worth ends by making man as unrecognizable as Marxism or National Socialism does. The highest form of activity it can really conceive for man is life on the organic level. For that reason it must perforce resort to some such explanation as the following to explain man's mental activity: understanding is a firmly established complex, "handed down to us through the ages, to the organization of which countless generations have labored with the same necessity with which the nature of the living organism, in general, reacts to the average and constantly recurring conditions of the environment."[78] For St. Thomas, "living adds something to mere existing and intelligence adds something to merely living." St. Thomas gives us the whole man, the material creature, the living organism and the intelligent being. Humanism falls as far short of the life and worth of man as do Marxism and National Socialism. Man, claims Humanism, is an organism whose perfection is adaptability to physical environment.[79] Man, says St. Thomas, is an intelligent being whose happiness is the enjoyment of truth.[80]

Naturally such contrasting views reflect themselves again in the Thomistic and Humanistic ideas of society. But the contrast is

[76] Above, pp. 91–95.

[77] Adler, M. J., *What Man Has Made of Man*, p. 208.

[78] Jung, C. G., *Psychological Types*, p. 583.

[79] "Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely moulded by that culture." Cfr. Chapter II, p. 61, Fourth point of Manifesto.

[80] III *C. G.*, 37; cfr. above, Chapter III, no. 53.

in principle not in terminology. Humanism speaks here in terms long familiar and sacred to the people of the West: the dignity of man, the ultimate value of the individual and the meaning of human life, justice, law, equality, freedom and so forth. The Humanist Manifesto echoes with such terms.[81] But, because the man of whom it speaks is a caricature of real man, the society which it plans is a caricature of real society.

Humanists are outspoken in their criticism of National Socialist society and are critical too—though in a more guarded way and with a far less unfriendly tone—of Marxist society. But much of the criticism by which we took exception to these two philosophies is equally applicable to Humanist society. Its concern for the dignity of man, for the worth of the individual, is as weak in deed as it is strong in word, because that eminence is a fundamental assumption which its own principles fail to sustain.

Humanism has no individual goal to give individual meaning to an individual's life. For St. Thomas man's pursuit of truth leads him outside and above any political community. The genesis of the goal he sets for each man is, as we indicated,[82] due to specifically Christian elements at work in his thought. But it is truth —in this case supernatural truth complementing natural truth— which here determines the nature of society and man's relation to society.

Yet, as we have also seen,[83] St. Thomas realizes that man by his very nature is a social being who can only achieve his complete perfection in union with his fellows. Humanism might retort that it, too, has the same conviction. But because of its implicit identification of mind with matter—its explicit denials to the contrary notwithstanding—and its evolutionary, organic view both of man and society, the ideal it sets is far from the Thomistic one. The society St. Thomas envisions is set apart from Marxism's materially productive one and National Socialism's brutal animal one because in it the perfection of man is primarily the perfection of his intelligence and the direction of his material wants and lower powers in the light of the mind. The society

[81] Cp. Points 13–15, Manifesto, Chapter II, p. 62.
[82] Chapter III, p. 87.
[83] Chapter III, pp. 87–89.

Humanism envisions breaks down in the same achievement because, far from freeing itself from the materialism and irrational factors of Marxism and National Socialism, it is the intellectual heir of modern philosophy just as truly as are the other two. A further tangible proof of this is the coincidence of the social programmes of Humanism, Marxism and National Socialism.[84] Thomism stands above and apart from these three philosophies of society: Humanism, Marxism and National Socialism stand together, for they arose in the same intellectual atmosphere and reflect the same currents of thought.

[84] Cfr. Chapter II, pp. 61–62.

CHAPTER V

ST. THOMAS AND THE SOCIAL ROLE OF TRUTH

A. Wisdom and Truth

1. *Introduction*

The degradation of man and the release of such consuming irrational forces consequent on the three philosophies of society we have examined raise the question as to how far mankind at present cannot only recover but rediscover the truth. We have insisted again and again that the harm of the falsity we criticized is the partial truth of which it is certain. There is indirect evidence of the strength and motive force of truth in the assurance with which Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism enunciate their principles and demand allegiance to them. These systems have vitality. In the very nature of things the false alone can never be responsible for that.

These philosophies have some truth and we have been concerned not to deny the truth they have. If nothing else did, the constant recurrence of the word "truth" in the exposition of these three systems would raise the problem of what truth they can allege and what its worth might be. Truth must mean something to man when such disparate philosophies, disparate in a measure among themselves, and disparate by comparison with Thomism, all have this in common—they all speak and act because they are true. They follow, then, an absolute—truth.

Man can discover or think he discovers many absolutes. But there is only one true absolute. There are many partial truths. All are important. To find and recognize truth is man's highest concern and greatest completion. Of his nature man discovers truth by degrees. But degrees mean a scale, and a scale means a standard, and a standard means an absolute. Here is our point of departure from Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism.

The truth they really have is only partial truth. The harm comes because they make it absolute truth and build on it the society of men.

Communism insists on the material factors in the life of man. Thomism does not deny them. National Socialism fosters the lower powers and elements in man. Thomism does not deny them. Humanism exalts science and its discoveries for the worth of man. Thomism does not deny them. But what Thomism does deny is that the material alone is the happiness of man, that the cultivation of the brutal is the happiness of man, that findings of science and their application and no more are the happiness of man. Life and happiness in its highest reach is for Thomism the satisfaction of mind in the quest for truth.

Significantly enough we have in St. Thomas himself an apt summary of his agreement and disagreement with Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism in terms of the wisdom which guides the affairs of men. There is true wisdom, he says, and there are other forms for which he uses the name of wisdom too, but which are really counterfeits. The end or good toward which one points makes the difference. If one makes material goods the end, then there is *earthly wisdom*. If one is concerned only with bodily excellence, then there is *animal wisdom*. If one exalts man alone, then there is *diabolical wisdom*, so-called because it is an imitation of the pride of the devil.[1]

[1] ". . . bonum dicitur dupliciter: uno modo quod vere bonum, et simpliciter perfectum; alio modo dicitur aliquid esse bonum, secundum quamdam similitudinem, quod est in malitia perfecium sicut dicitur bonus latro, vel perfectus latro. . . . Et sicut circa ea quae sunt vere bona, invenitur aliqua altissima causa, quae est summum bonum, quod est ultimus finis, per cujus cognitionem dicitur homo vere sapiens; ita etiam in malis est invenire aliquid ad quod alia referuntur, sicut ad ultimum finem, per cujus cognitionem homo dicitur esse sapiens ad male agendum. . . . Quicumque autem avertitur a fine debito, necesse est quod aliquem finem indebitum sibi praestituat; quia omne agens agit propter finem. Unde si praestituat sibi finem in bonis corporalibus, vocatur sapientia animalis; si autem in aliqua excellentia, vocatur sapientia animalis; si autem in aliqua excellentia, vocatur sapientia diabolica, propter imitationem superbiae diaboli." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 45, a. 1 ad 1.

2. *Wisdom*

In introducing the conception of wisdom are we straying from the specific concern of this chapter, the social rôle of truth? We think not. And to strengthen that conviction we might consider briefly St. Thomas' ideal of wisdom and its integration with our present topic.

Philosophy, we were at pains to point out in the last chapter, is a true knowledge—a science in its own right. As such it is the highest science and identified with wisdom. Not only does it, like all the other sciences, physical or mathematical, demonstrate conclusions through principles, not only is it a knowledge through causes, but it is knowledge and demonstration through the highest cause and the first principles.[2] The quest of the mind for truth and its perfection by it is achieved progressively and in varying degrees by the three most important intellectual virtues, wisdom, understanding and science. Depending on the emphasis, knowledge is variously designated by one of these three names.[3]

[2] ". . . sapientia est quadam scientia, inquantum habet id quod est commune omnibus scientiis, ut scilicet ex principiis conclusiones demonstret; Sed quia habet aliquid proprium supra alias scientias, inquantum scilicet de omnibus judicat, et non solum quantum ad conclusiones, sed etiam quantum ad prima principia; ideo habet rationem perfectioris virtutis quam scientia." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 57, a. 2 ad 1.

[3] ". . . virtus intellectualis speculativa est per quam intellectus speculativus perficitur ad considerandum verum; hoc enim est bonum opus ejus. Verum autem est dupliciter considerabile: uno modo, sicut per se notum; alio modo, sicut per aliud notum. Quod autem est per se notum, se habet ut principium et percipitur statim ab intellectu; et ideo habitus perficiens intellectum ad hujusmodi veri est habitus principiorum. Verum autem quod est per aliud notum, non statim percipitur ab intellectu, sed per inquisitionem rationis; et se habet in ratione termini. Quod quidem potest esse dupliciter: uno modo, ut sit ultimum in aliquo genere; alio modo, ut sit ultimum respectu totius cognitionis humanae. Et quia 'ea quae sunt posterius nota quoad nos, sunt priora, et magis nota secundum naturam,' ut dicitur (Aristotle, *Physics*, Bk. I, C. 1, 184a 16–20), ideo id quod est ultimum respectu totius cognitionis humanae, est id quod est primum et maxime cognoscibile secundum naturam. Et circa hujusmodi est sapientia, quae 'considerat altissimas causas,' ut dicitur (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Bk. I, Cs. 1 & 2), unde convenienter judicat et ordinat de omnibus, quia judicium perfectum et universale haberi non potest nisi per resolutionem ad primas causas." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 57, a. 2; cfr. I–IIae, q. 68, a. 7; II–IIae, q. 4, a. 8; q. 47, a. 5; *Virt. comm.*, aa. 12 & 13; *Q. D. De Anima*, a. 16.

To indicate the order and relative importance of these three intellectual virtues St. Thomas compares their hierarchy to the hierarchy of the vegetative, sensitive and rational souls in man. And just as the rational soul of man is superior to his vegetative and sensitive souls, virtually containing them and subsuming their activity, so wisdom is superior to science and understanding and in its own light subsumes the principles and conclusions of the other two.[4] Thus wisdom implies the highest reaches of truth—concern for truth is its end, and since truth is the ultimate end of the universe, wisdom has the greatest of all possible concerns.[5] So wisdom is for St. Thomas the summit of knowledge and truth and he describes the wise man as one who knows all even the difficult through cause and certitude, one who becomes aware of himself in his search, and one who orders and persuades others.[6]

The strength of wisdom is in its subject matter, being as being, and in the first indemonstrable principles consequent on this study.[7] It differs from all other sciences and arts and stands above them because of these indemonstrable principles which are at once its own foundation and the foundation of all other knowledge down to the lowliest physical science.[8] Though these prin-

[4] "Unde si quis recte consideret istae tres virtutes non ex aequo distinguuntur ab invicem, sed ordine quodam; sicut accidit in totis potentialibus, quorum una pars est perfectiora altera, sicut anima rationalis est perfectior quam sensibilis, et sensibilis quam vegitabilis. Hoc enim modo scientia dependet ab intellectu sicut a principaliori: et utrumque a sapientia sicut a principalissimo, quae sub se continet et intellectum et scientiam, ut de conclusionibus scientiarum dijudicans, et de principiis earundem." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 57, a. 2 ad 2.

[5] "Oportet igitur ultimum finem universi esse bonum intellectus. Hoc autem est veritas. Oportet igitur veritatem esse ultimum finem totius universi; et circa ejus considerationem principaliter sapientiam insistere." I *C. G.*, 1; cfr. III *C. G.*, 47.

[6] ". . . ille sapiens dicatur qui scit omnia etiam difficilia per certitudinem et causam, ipsum scire propter se quaerens, aliis ordinans et persuadens." *In I Meta.*, lect. 2.

[7] ". . . ad Philosophum potius pertinet consideratio dignitatum, inquantum ad ipsum pertinet consideratio entis in communi, ad quod per se pertinent hujusmodi principia prima, ut maxime apparet in eo quod est maxime primum principium, scilicet quod impossibile est idem esse et non esse." *In III Meta.*, lect. 5.

[8] "Modus de quo est cognitio in scientiis est duplex. Unus modus

ciples are not subject to demonstration they compel assent because they are evident in themselves. When they are enunciated either the predicate falls in the definition of the subject or the predicate is the same as the subject. Possibly there are some who would not assent to these principles; but the fault then is an inability to apprehend one or other of the terms of the proposition in which they are cast.[9]

Wisdom, then, moves and acts in the atmosphere of these principles. It draws its conclusions from them. It cannot prove them, true, but it can defend them. So convinced is it of this that it willingly disputes against its adversaries provided they grant what is inescapable. Failing this, it can at least point out the source of their error.[10] Comprehending being in its widest amplitude, wisdom penetrates its depths and when it speaks of and up-

secundum quod de unoquoque cognoscitur quid est. Alius modus secundum quod cognitio per demonstrationem acquiritur. Primo autem modo non pertinet ad aliquam scientiam tradere cognitionem de principiis demonstrationis, quia talis cognitio principiorum praesupponitur ante omnes scientias. Quod enim unumquodque horum sit ens 'ex nunc novimus,' idest statim a principio cognoscimus quid significent haec principia, per quorum cognitionem statim ipsa principia cognoscuntur. Et quia talis cognitio principiorum inest nobis statim a natura, concludit quod omnes artes et scientiae, quae sunt de quibusdam aliis cognitionibus, utuntur praedictis principiis tamquam naturaliter notis." *Ibidem.*

[9] ". . . philosophi erit considerare de omni substantia inquantum hujusmodi, et de primis syllogismorum principiis. Ad hujusmodi, et de primis syllogismorum principiis. Ad hujus autem evidentiam sciendum, quod propositiones per se notae sunt, quae statim notis terminis cognoscuntur. . . . Hoc autem contingit in illis propositionibus, in quibus praedicatum ponitur in definitione subjecti, vel praedicatum est idem subjecto.—Sed contingit aliquam propositionem quantum in se est esse per se notam, non tamen esse per se notam omnibus qui ignorant definitionem praedicati et subjecti. . . . Illa autem sunt per se nota omnibus, quorum termini in conceptionem omnium cadunt." *In IV Meta.*, lect. 5.

[10] "Sed tamen considerandum est in scientiis philosophicis, quod inferiores scientiae, nec probant sua principia, nec contra negantem sua principia disputant, sed hoc relinquunt superiori scientiae; suprema vero inter eas, scilicet metaphysica, disputat contra negantem sua principia, si adversarius aliquid concedit; si autem nihil concedat, non potest cum se disputare; potest tamen solvere rationes ipsius." *S. T.*, I, q. 1, a. 8.

holds the first indemonstrable principles of being it does so because it has apprehended their terms.[11]

As a final facet of St. Thomas' teaching we might approach the problem of the application of wisdom to society by examining the relation of wisdom and prudence. This latter virtue is preeminently a practical one which controls and directs the activities of men, both individual and social. In one sense, says St. Thomas, prudence is no more than wisdom in human affairs. His argument is that wisdom without qualification considers the highest cause and, consequently, the highest cause in any department is the concern of wisdom in that department. Now in the realm of human acts the highest cause is the common end of the whole of human life. This is the concern of prudence. Thus prudence is wisdom in human affairs. Prudence is restricted and, hence, is not wisdom simply, but in its own field it can be called wisdom.[12]

In terms of the above wisdom and prudence are much the same. But we can and should emphasize their difference. It is one of end and means. Wisdom's concern is the very object of happiness, the highest intelligible; prudence considers the means of

[11] "Determinat autem ea philosophus non demonstrando, sed rationes terminorum tradendo, ut quid totum et quid pars, et sic de aliis. Hoc autem cognitio veritas praedictorum principiorum manifesta relinquitur." *In IV Meta.*, lect. 5; ". . . veritas et cognitio principiorum indemonstrabilium dependet ex ratione terminorum. Cognitio enim quid est totum et quid est pars, statim cognoscitur, quod omne totum est majus sua parte. Cognoscere autem rationis entis et non entis, et totius et partis, et aliorum quae consequuntur ad ens, ex quibus sicut ex terminis constituuntur principia indemonstrabilia pertinet ad sapientiam. . . . Et ideo sapientia non solum utitur principiis indemonstrabilibus, quorum est intellectus, concludendo ex eis, sicut etiam aliae scientiae, sed etiam judicando de eis, et disputando contra negantes." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 66, a. 5 ad 4.

[12] ". . . sapientia considerat causam altissimam simpliciter; unde consideratio causae altissimae in quolibet genere pertinet ad sapientiam in illo genere. In genere autem humanorum actuum causa altissima est finis communis toti vitae humanae: et hunc finem intendit prudentia. . . . Unde manifestum est quod prudentia est sapientia in rebus humanis; non autem sapientia simpliciter, quia non est circa causam altissimam simpliciter; est enim circa bonum humanum: hoc autem non est optimum eorum quae sunt. Et ideo signanter dicitur, quod 'prudentia' est sapientia viro, non autem sapientia simpliciter." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 47, a. 2 ad 1; cfr. I, q. 1, a. 6; III *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 2, a. 4, q. 2.

arriving at that happiness. Though in this life wisdom has only an imperfect grasp on its object, it does hold it in some degree, and by that much is nearer happiness than prudence.[13] For that reason wisdom commands prudence and prudence ministers to it.[14]

3. *Three Wisdoms and Their Deficiency*

We can now return from this consideration of wisdom to St. Thomas' division of true wisdom from earthly wisdom, which we applied to Marxism; from animal wisdom, which we applied to National Socialism; from diabolical wisdom, which we applied to Humanism. The detailed criticism—the problem of the previous two chapters—of these three philosophies in the light of Thomistic thought furnishes more than enough justification as to why St. Thomas might hold Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism to be counterfeit wisdoms ill-suited to guide men in individual or social life.

In the Thomistic ideal of wisdom there are three touchstones whereby he judges the above false wisdoms and finds them wanting. The first is his statement: "He therefore who simply considers the highest cause of the whole universe, which is God, is especially called wise."[15] The second is the statement: "Moreover in the realm of human acts the highest cause is the common end

[13] ". . . prudentia considerat ea quibus pervenitur ad felicitatem; sed sapientia considerat ipsum objectum felicitatis, quod est altissimum intelligibile. Et si quidem esset perfecta consideratio sapientiae respectu sui objecti, esset perfecta felicitas in actu sapientiae. Sed quia actus sapientiae in hac vita est imperfectus respectu principalis objecti, quod est Deus; ideo actus sapientiae est quaedam inchoatio, seu participatio futurae felicitatis; et sic propinquius se habet ad felicitatem quam prudentia." *S. T.*, I–IIae, q. 66, a. 5 ad 2.

[14] ". . . prudentia non imperat ipsi sapientiae, sed e converso. . . . Non enim prudentia habet se intromittere de altissimis, quae considerat sapientia; sed imperat de his quae ordinantur ad sapientiam, scilicet quomodo homines debeant ad sapientiam pervenire; unde in hoc est prudentia, seu politica, ministra sapientiae; introducit enim ad eam, praeparans ei viam, sicut ostiarius ad regem." *Ibidem*, ad 1.

[15] "Ille igitur qui considerat simpliciter altissimam causam totius universi, quae Deus est, maxime sapiens dicitur." *S. T.*, I, q. 1, a. 6.

of the whole of human life."[16] The third is the statement: "It is the part of the wise man to order: ordination of things only comes about through the knowledge of the relation and proportion of the ordered to one another, and to something higher which is their end; for the order of things to one another is in direct proportion to their order to an end."[17]

The three above quotations set the pattern for the formation of the ideas of God, man and society. We have already pointed out how sharply Thomism differs from Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism in these ideas. Moreover the difference has its origin in divergent ideas of knowledge and truth. Wisdom, as St. Thomas points out, does not demonstrate its self-evident principles. It can, though, and does dispute with its opponents whenever it can find common ground with them. If this is not possible, it can at least point out their failure. That is precisely how Thomistic wisdom approaches, examines and criticizes the philosophies of Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism.

Such is the strength of its wisdom. That fact goes a long way too, incidentally, in explaining the present phenomena of the resort to name-calling by the adherents of these three false wisdoms in establishing their position. "It is a certain satisfaction," says J. Maritain,

> for the mind to attain to positions and oppositions so absolutely primordial, that whatever respect and amenity is felt for the person of their contradictors by the philosophers, the latter will have to renounce all possibility of courtesy, and to exchange offensive words. As long as one is not reduced to denying one's opponent the right to exist intellectually, there is no real radical philosophic conflict.[18]

But to return to the ideas of God, man and society as Thomistic

[16] "In genere autem humanorum actuum causa altissima est finis communis toti vitae humanae." *S. T.*, II–IIae, q. 47, a. 2 ad 1.

[17] ". . . ordinare sapientis est: ordinatio enim aliquorum fieri non potest nisi per cognitionem habitudinis et proportionis ordinatorum ad invicem, et ad aliquid altius ejus, quod est finis eorum; ordo enim aliquorum ad invicem est propter ordinem eorum ad finem." II *C. G.*, 24.

[18] Maritain, J., *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 53.

wisdom discovers them and as Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism discover them. Thomism's position and opposition is so absolutely primordial and strong that it can complement while criticizing and reinforce while rejecting. On the basis of its own principles it knows why it accepts what is true in these philosophies, just as it knows why it must take exception to what is erroneous in them. It has no need or inclination to resort to injurious terms for its own justification and right to criticize.

We have already given its answer to Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism on the all-important and truly wise ideas of God, man and society. For Marxist materialism the concrete dialectic of history is the complete explanation of reality. It posits intelligibility, and then, because of its militant atheism, denies the source of that intelligibility. It is wise in the recognition of material causality. In its over-emphasis of that same causality, though, it spoils, and the result is a counterfeit—earthly wisdom.

So, too, its view of man suffers from the same defect. Prudence is identified with wisdom because its concern is the highest cause of human action—the common end of the whole of human life. Marxism says much, and says it wisely, of the economic factors affecting the life of man. But here again it does not say enough; and because it does not say enough, what it does say does not ring true.

Man knows and knows the truth, says Marxism. But all he knows is material reality and truth as the domination of that reality. True wisdom, though, shows that there is a province of reality which cannot be dominated. Moreover the mind of man and its quest point to the immateriality of that province. There is a part of man which is left unsatisfied by mere empirical knowledge and merely empirical achievement. To call the "*secteur*" of metaphysics a fiction, as Marxism does, is itself a fiction whose disastrous result cannot but reflect itself in determining the common end of the whole of human life. There is a materialism and there is a realism, and the materialism demanding such a view as the above is untrue to the matter of which man is a part and on which he works. In its theory and practice there is hollowness. The true wisdom of St. Thomas—which he holds to be the

possession of all men who can see by the mind—not only affirms itself in its cool examination but points out the disservice Marxist materialism does to the nature of man. Setting a goal far short of his true worth the result is a counterfeit—earthly wisdom.

If, moreover, the determination of the end of human life is the great factor in determining the nature of the society and the state,[19] the Marxist view of man cannot but reflect itself in Marxist society. For Marxism the goal is the economically productive society—that and no more. All effort, mental, moral and material as conceived by Marxism, falls under the blight of that overshadowing ideal. We have contrasted already [20] the order—which St. Thomas sees it as the duty of the wise man to achieve—in Thomistic and Marxist society. For St. Thomas, because man is an intelligent being, he must demand and work for his own individual pre-eminence, a natural and social bond between himself and other men, and a virtuous life in society. With but earthly wisdom as a guide Marxism looks only to economic productivity, communism, and class warfare in achieving the perfect society. Thomism's strength is in the intellect of man directing under the guidance of truth. Marxism's weakness is the conviction of the control of blind forces that of themselves must inevitably destroy man.

National Socialism corresponds to the next false wisdom St. Thomas lists—animal wisdom. Just as the strength and weakness of Marxism is an overbearing materialism whose description is earthly wisdom, so the strength and weakness of National Socialism is a brutal vitality whose summary is animal wisdom.

The first norm of wisdom we gave above was the explication of the idea of God. The unalterable opposition between Thomism and National Socialism in that task—even their mere comparison—reveals not only the weakness but the perversion of animal wisdom in the ideal it sets. In the words of a previous quotation: "A God who will end by being identified with an invisible force at work in the blood, is set up against transcendent Being." [21]

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[19] Cfr. Chapter III, pp. 87–88.
[20] Cfr. Chapter III, pp. 88–90.
[21] Chapter IV, p. 101.

Animal wisdom not content with glorifying the irrational goes further and deifies it.

There are irrational factors in man's composition. True wisdom does not deny this. But where Thomism finds and extols immateriality and intelligence in man, National Socialism never goes beyond the organic and biological. In Thomistic wisdom intelligibility whose source is Supreme Intelligence suffuses the universe and guides the life of man. In National Socialism a blind and brutal force drives man on, and the "ultimate and unfathomable meaning of existence" is the God of race who would not exist if race and blood did not exist.[22]

National Socialism does not deny God explicitly as does Marxism. But because it, too, is of the earth only and a caricature of true wisdom, its God is a terrible caricature of the true God. The German philosophy of society we have called animal wisdom and in that sense we have applied the adjective "brutal" to it. But no animal, save the rational animal, man, could so pervert reality as to offer the ultimate National Socialism does. In an applied sense there is animal wisdom and animals have it; but when we adopt the phrase "animal wisdom" for National Socialism we imply a falsity brute creatures could not have and which man offers only because he prostitutes the mind which alone is capable of such excess. Sadly enough, only because of the intelligence which he scorns can man even reach such a denial.

That original falsity and denial of National Socialism introduces disorder from the beginning. So there is no wonder if there is further disorder in the idea of man. If National Socialism's God is irrational, we can but expect that its idea of man will be irrational, too. For Thomistic wisdom what is most important in man is on the level of intelligence. For animal wisdom what is most important in man is on the level of the organic and sensitive. One roots human action in reasoned and ordered control—"ordinare sapientis est."[23] The other gives free rein to impulsive and emotional excess.

True wisdom, indeed, does not deny the strength of impulse and emotion. And this is true even when they are disordered, as they

[22] Chapter II, pp. 54-55.
[23] Cfr. no. 17 above.

must be when they become the norm of man's activity. Wisdom which is a question of order demands the subjection of what is common to men and animals to what is proper to man, the guidance of mind. Impulse and emotion have their own direction and their own function. Whether they are to be noble or ignoble depends on whether they guide or are led.[24] In either event they are real in their own right. Their conquest and government by mind is the order of true wisdom; their complete domination in their own strength is the disorder of animal wisdom.

Finally, there must be so much difference between the society of true wisdom and the society of animal wisdom. Order and peace is the theme of one; war and strife is the explicit aim of the other. Even though we did not actually see the hatred and cruelty and callousness National Socialism has unloosed in the world those brutal emotions lay frightfully near the surface of its philosophy. We could not but know that it needed only the lightest of touches to quicken them into activity. The impulses and emotions of man, we have said, have their own strength. Left to follow their own devices instead of the guidance of reason they end by consuming man and wrecking society.

Yet their strength is the strength animal wisdom relies on. With that wisdom for direction the ideal of the stable order of society yields to an ideal of unending warfare. That is precisely the ideal of National Socialism—world revolution and "eternal war."[25] But man being man, the quest of truth for true wisdom is diverted in animal wisdom, not to the temporary satisfaction of brutal hungers, but to the insatiable and perduring lust for power. Again it is a case of man's inability to be other than himself even in the very denial of his worth.

[24] ". . . homo et equus in hoc conveniant quod est sensibile, non tamen oportet quod anima sensibilis sit unius rationis in homine et equo: quia homo et equus non sunt unum animal in specie; unde in homine anima sensibilis est multa nobilior quam in aliis animalibus quantum ad principales actus . . . in omni enim toto potestativo potentia inferior superiori conjuncta perfectior invenitur, ut potestas propositi multo excellentior est in rege. Anima autem sensibilis in homine per essentiam conjungitur animae rationali. . . ." II *Sent.*, d. 18, q. 3 ad 4.
[25] Cfr. Chapter IV, p. 105 ff.

True wisdom uses prudence—wisdom in human affairs—to order the relations of men. Animal wisdom, a counterfeit, uses cunning, also a counterfeit, in the hope of achieving the same end. But that cunning is carnal—grasping and shot through with self-interest. It is as changeable and explosive as the irrational powers in man that spur it on. Thomistic wisdom orders, considers the highest cause of the whole universe, the common end of the whole of human life, in the light of unchangeable principles. Animal wisdom brings only disorder, debases the highest cause of the whole universe and the common end of the whole of human life.

In completion we applied the diabolical wisdom of St. Thomas to the last philosophy of society we examined, Humanism. St. Thomas uses this designation because such wisdom is an imitation of the pride of the devil. Of course, to speak of the devil sounds very naïve to modern ears. Given the general attitude of Humanism it is very easy to see why. Seven centuries ago, though, St. Thomas, in characterizing a certain false wisdom as diabolical, pointed to a state of mind which agrees too clearly with that of Humanism to be merely coincidental.

Before going further we might examine just what St. Thomas means by diabolical pride. He says:

> In another way one may desire to be like unto God in some respect which is not natural to one; as if one were to desire to create heaven and earth, which is proper to God; in which desire there would be sin. It was in this way that the devil desired to be like God. Not that he desired to resemble God by being subject to no one else absolutely; for so he would be desiring his own non-being, since no creature can exist except by holding its existence under God. But he desired resemblance to God in this respect, by desiring as his last end of beatitude, something which he could attain by the virtue of his own nature, turning his appetite away from supernatural beatitude, which is attained by God's grace.—Or, if he desired as his last end that likeness of God, which is bestowed by grace, he sought to have it by the power of his own nature, and not from Divine assistance according to God's ordering.[26]

[26] "Alio vero modo potest aliquis appetere similis esse Deo, quantum ad hoc in quo non natus est assimilari; sicut si quis appeteret creare caelum et terram, quod est proprium Dei, in quo appetitu esset peccatum. Et hoc modo diabolus appetitit esse ut Deus, non ut ei assimilaretur quantum ad hoc quod est nulli subesse simpliciter; quia sic suum non esse appeteret, cum nulla creatura esse possit, nisi per hoc quod sub Deo esse participat. Sed in hoc appetiit indebite esse similis Deo, quia appetiit ut finem ultimum beatitudinis id ad quod virtute suae naturae poterat pervenire, avertens suum appetitum a beatitudine supernaturali, quae est ex gratia Dei.—Vel si appetiit ut ultimum finem illam Dei similitudinem quae datur ex gratia, voluit hoc habere per virtutem suae naturae poterat pervenire, avertens suum appetitum a beatitudine supernaturali, quae est ex gratia Dei." *S. T.*, I, q. 63, a. 3; cfr. I–IIae, q. 73, a. 5; II–IIae, q. 46, a. 1.

In the light of the above quotation we can now proceed to Humanism which we described as diabolical wisdom. Humanism says man is the measure—the measure of truth, of God, of man, of society. To appreciate the factors which vitiate Humanism and justify its inclusion as a false wisdom two phrases of the preceding quotation might be emphasized. Characteristic of diabolical pride is a desire to resemble God. But that desire is not (1) a desire of resemblance in the sense that "he desired to be subject to no one else absolutely; for so he would be desiring his own non-being, since no creature can exist except by holding its existence under God." It is (2) a desire or resemblance "by desiring as his last end of beatitude something which he could attain by the virtue of his own nature, turning his appetite away from supernatural beatitude, which is attained by God's grace."

Bringing the parallel to Humanism we find in it (1) the idea of God, and (2) the avoidance of complete submission to the import of that idea by the contention that it is realized in the God of emergent evolution who is tending towards deity or in the God of the psychologists which is a projection into the universe of man's own sense of personal agency.[27] The inversion this implies has been indicated in a comparison of the norms of knowledge and truth of Thomistic wisdom and diabolical wisdom. For St. Thomas, as we have shown, the divine Mind is that measuring and not measured (*mensurans, non mensuratus*), while the human mind is that measured and not measuring (*mensuratus, non mensurans quidem res naturalis, sed artificialis tantum*).[28] Hu-

[27] Cfr. Chapter IV, pp. 116–117.

[28] Cfr. Chapter I, p. 14.

manists making man the sole measure of truth must perforce consider him to an indefinable extent the master and creator of reality. Yet the dilemma of retaining some aspect of intelligibility, which even the beloved science of the Humanists craves, is revealed in the recurrence of the idea of God—always a new one of course—in all the shades of thought of diabolical wisdom. If man is the measure there is no goal outside himself to which he need tend. Withal, one of the main weaknesses of Humanism is its vacillation. At present its adherents are at the mercy of ever-changing current science or are abjectly submitting themselves to an all-powerful state as the absolute. Let the demand be man as the measure; the great weakness of diabolical wisdom cannot but reveal itself if there is compliance to that demand. Man is that measured and not measuring and that implies intelligence, intelligibility and supreme Intelligence. And in Humanism, too, there is the fact of man realizing his own nature in spite of himself. For implicit in Humanism's course, even though it is surrender to the wrong absolute, is the proof of man as that measured and not measuring.

The same diabolical wisdom in its excessive demands for man betrays him. True wisdom, to be sure, places man on an eminence where he is also in a position to make demands. But that eminence is in accord with his nature. He does not make truth, he discovers it. In the discovery he lives, and his vitality is the highest form of vitality—the life of the mind. The rightful activity of that mind safeguards not only itself but guides and directs in fullest measure of achievement all the inferior powers which also develop in the composite, man.

Diabolical wisdom, we say, in its excessive demands for man betrays man. Theoretically it will hold itself subject to no norm. The norm it is forced into fixing we have already indicated.[29] It categorically states that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected. The upshot is that man is described in terms of unconscious forces and drives, of adjustment to a universe essentially blind, of a materialism and an irrationalism that differ only in refinement of expression from the materialism and irrationalism of Marxism and National Socialism.

[29] Cfr. Chapter II, pp. 59–66.

Moreover, the society which diabolical wisdom would establish does no more than reinforce the harm. Once again, though, man's inability to be totally untrue to himself evidences itself. Humanism would have man the measure of all things. Yet the craving of man for an absolute outside himself, as much a part of him as his blood and bones and flesh, finds its substitute in the society Humanism proclaims. The individual man is completely subordinated to the mass entity. His life, his liberty, his happiness is only achieved in a process of growth indistinct from that of the community, the end beyond himself.

Thomistic wisdom, as we have pointed out,[30] while fully aware of the social nature of man, safeguards the worth and liberty of each person by establishing an individual goal to give individual meaning to the individual's life. With Humanism the dignity of man is a fundamental assumption. In Thomism the dignity of man is an explicitly established premise. As a matter of fact much of the drive of Humanism in this regard comes from the residue of a heritage which Thomism retains in its full strength. All Humanism can offer is its attenuated implications. The pride of diabolical wisdom falsely overestimates; the true humility of Thomistic wisdom rightly indicates.

B. Thomistic Wisdom and Application to Society

1. *Faith in Truth and Science*

Eduard Benes, former president of Czecho-Slovakia and considered an outstanding political thinker, lists four prerequisites for an individual's "life worth living" in society. They are:

> Faith in truth and science,
> Respect for universal moral principles,
> Honesty and reliability of the pledged word,
> Belief in human dignity.[31]

The purport of the rest of this chapter will be to show how ad-

[30] Chapter III, pp. 87–88; Chapter IV, pp. 119–121.
[31] Quoted in *The World We Want to Live In* (A Discussion edited by Everett Ross Clinchy), (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1942), p. 81.

mirably Thomistic teaching on truth aids in the direction of achieving these goals.

The worth of Thomism for the first requisite, faith in truth and science, has been suggested in the criticism it made of Humanism and the supplement it offered to that thought. Thomism denies neither the truth of philosophy nor the truth of science. Humanism denies one and nullifies the other.

The main weakness of Humanism as we saw it was a disproportionate exaltation of science and a consequent belittlement of philosophy. It closes itself off from the field of highest truth either by adopting the method of science in the particular problems of philosophy or by relying on the findings of science alone to achieve the complete happiness of man. Fortunately there is increasing realization that the method of science and the discoveries of science are of themselves insufficient. The problem is the use to which they are put. Science of itself can never answer that question.

It is here that Humanism fails completely. So wedded is it to the scientific method, so bound up is it with the methods of particular sciences, that what is hailed as a distinctly modern achievement ends in nothing else than a disservice to science. There is true science and by this much science is truth. But at its highest it is only a partial aspect of truth. The concern of man and society is complete truth. The full apprehension of truth, moreover, guides as well as completes scientific truth. Humanism, though, by its narrow view has shut itself from the fullness of truth. More than that, it has perverted scientific truth by demanding of it and for it a function of which it is totally incapable.

Thomism's appreciation of the degrees of knowledge obviates that mistake and guarantees the whole truth which is its most important concern. Holding the field of philosophy and the field of science to be separate departments, it justifies and limits each. There is a consequent clarity, a consequent appreciation of the function and result of each. Instead of disastrous independence there is harmonious interdependence.

Thomism takes issue with Humanism's claim that there is only one science—the science of phenomena. If that be true, there is no wisdom; the intellect is a slave in the service of sensitive apprehension. The Thomistic teaching of the life of the mind, to which we have constantly recurred, can never permit such a conclusion.

> If positivism old and new . . . does not understand that metaphysics is authentically a science, a knowledge of a perfected and completed type, it means that they do not understand that the intellect *sees*. For them, sense alone is intuitive, the intellect having only a function of connection and of unification. Let them be silent! for we cannot say "I," we cannot utter a noun of the language, without testifying that there are objects in things, that is, centers of visibility, which our senses do not reach, but which our intellect does. Of course there is no *angelistic*, intellectual intuition, in the sense of Plato and Descartes —I mean an intuition which does not need the mediation of the senses; of course there is nothing in the intellect which does not originally derive from sensible experience. But it is precisely the activity of the intellect which disengages from this experience and brings to the fire of immaterial visibility in act, the objects which sense cannot decipher in things, and sees.[32]

Thomistic realism maintains and saves all the truth discerned in the science of phenomena. And it does so because it complements and defends those sciences by its own wisdom—the wisdom of philosophy. In the realm where the sciences are at home it is their duty to decree what is true and what is false. Thomistic wisdom has no desire to intrude there. But that same wisdom demands for philosophy a higher place in the edifice of knowledge because its purpose, which is concerned with primary causes, reveals to it realities that are more profound and more essential.

With such an ideal philosophy justifies itself, the while safeguarding and respecting the autonomy of the physical sciences. What we have so far said about knowledge, truth and wisdom as St. Thomas envisions them, indicates how this can be achieved. For it is the philosopher who must know and justify the principles of the other sciences. It is the philosopher who establishes not only his own limits but the boundaries outside of which scientific

[32] Maritain, J., "Science, Philosophy and Religion," *Science, Philosophy and Religion* (A Symposium), p. 175. Italics author's.

disciplines cannot step without being false to themselves. It is the philosopher who protects the other sciences against the hidden domination of unconscious metaphysics, and in that way safeguards their liberty and autonomy.

Thus does Thomistic wisdom by contrast with Humanism contribute to the first point we have set down—faith in truth and science. And more, on the natural level it guarantees rational conviction of the two. The function of the wise man is to order says St. Thomas. A comparison of Thomism with Humanism is one appreciation of how it satisfies its own demand. In the strength of its principles we cannot only criticize the disorder of modern thought, but we can offer a hierarchy of knowledge which saves the fullness of truth.

2. *Respect for Universal Moral Principles*

In the consideration of the above second point we might reintroduce a division of truth which we briefly indicated in the first chapter. It is a division, given and used many times by St. Thomas, into truth of life, truth of justice and truth of doctrine. Such a division serves to emphasize the results rather than the nature of truth. And just as previously we used the contrast of Humanism to bring into relief the contribution of St. Thomas to the first requisite of society, so here we shall continue the contrast of Thomism with Marxism and National Socialism as we study what his wisdom means in respect for universal moral principles.

In reviewing what we have said of these divisions of truth by St. Thomas, truth of life can be considered as true human existence within the individual unit of society.[33] Truth of justice may be described as true sociability or the adequate fulfillment of personal obligations to one's neighbor and to society. While the truth of life is personal, the truth of justice has for its concern others. Truth of doctrine is the communication of knowledge, practical or speculative, infused or acquired.[34]

These divisions of truth indicate its scope. For truth in action is coextensive with the whole of man's activity: it ranges across

[33] *S. T.*, II-IIae, q. 109, a. 2 ad 3; cfr. Chapter I, pp. 17–18.
[34] *S. T.*, II-IIae, q. 109, a. 3 ad 2; cfr. Chapter I, p. 18.

the whole of his personal and social life. The fact that St. Thomas examined and defined truth in terms of such general realms evidences clearly how he appreciated its sweep. Not the least of his services to truth, and society too, is his fidelity in doing so.

Truth of doctrine demands that truth defend itself by every means available to it. One way of doing this we have already shown. In the strength of its own sure wisdom it must take exception to anything that distorts it. Thus it is that we have found Thomisic wisdom in opposition to the earthly wisdom of Marxism and the animal wisdom of National Socialism.

One way to appreciate the strength and surety of Thomistic thought in that task is to contrast its calm appraisal of Marxism and National Socialism with their hysterical rejection of thought opposed to their own. Thomism finds and admits elements of truth in the systems it criticizes; Marxism and National Socialism deny flatly any truth but their own. Thomism holds that truth is universal, the common possession of all who seek rightly. Marxism and National Socialism restrict truth until it becomes atrophied—the truth of class or the truth of race.

The social consequences of these various systems in this rôle of truth quickly reveal themselves. Certainly one phase of respect for universal moral principles is mankind's whole-hearted subjection to truth wherever it can be found. That Marxism and National Socialism restrict truth is shown in their actual, absolute and working negation and exclusion of what does not suit their narrow view. The weapons to this end are force and hatred. The excesses of the two in the "liquidation" of intellectuals, in the suppression of schools, in the censorship of reading, in the direction of the arts—all in terms of class or race—confirm in practice the direction of their principles.

Now the rejection of error forms an active part of the truth of doctrine. The contrast, though, in the way Thomism achieves this and the way Marxism and National Socialism do is striking. In itself it is a convincing argument of the superiority of the wisdom of St. Thomas to the other wisdoms. The forces released by them in society are just as restrictive as the truth of class and the truth of race. They defend their wisdom by hatred, abuse and

brute force. It is a truism to say that all of these are corrosive not only of the individual but of society. Thomism has no need of such a course. Respect for its self-evident principles demands not only their acceptance but their defense too. But, as we have said and shown, the defense is in terms of calm appraisal not hysterical rejection.

We can also compare Thomism, Marxism and National Socialism in the sphere of the truth of justice. That truth implicates all our relations with others. It involves not only our ties with those immediately near us, not only our ties with our state or nation, but, much wider, our ties in the union of all mankind. We have criticized truth of class and truth of race as narrow and restrictive and that criticism is especially applicable in the present case.

There can be no respect for universal moral principles—here those that affect the relations of all men—in Marxism and National Socialism because by the force of their position they cut themselves off in theory and practice from regard for them. Universal embraces all mankind. The earthly wisdom of Marxism ends in the restriction of the sum total of truth and justice to one class, the proletariat. The animal wisdom of National Socialism ends in the restriction of the sum total of truth and justice to one race, the pure Aryans. The fact that both Marxism and National Socialism demand and introduce strife, warfare and even death in society should occasion no surprise. In the measure they have restricted truth they have excluded those who do not and cannot agree with them. Not content with excluding them, they would eliminate them. The disruptiveness of Marxism and National Socialism is only too evident in the present day as proof.

Thomistic wisdom abhors such exclusiveness. That is the reason it takes issue with Marxism and National Socialism and characterizes them as earthly and animal wisdom. But it is much more than critical. In the conviction of truth natural to all men and evident to those who truly seek, it finds a common basis not only for national but for international society as well. Its principles provide a common fund of knowledge in which all can meet, refine, exchange and pool their thought for the betterment of all.

Thomism shows its fidelity to the truth of justice even in the

very way it separates itself from Marxism and National Socialism. Its quarrel with these two philosophies of society is on the plane of principle. Sure of its own wisdom and convinced, further, that there is no knowledge which is totally false, it respects the highest right of every man—the quest for truth. Its ability, moreover, to disengage the true from the false in Marxism and National Socialism gives concrete proof of more than lip service to this ideal.

Finally, where earthly and animal wisdom fail in the truth of life, Thomistic wisdom amply fulfills. Truth of life we have defined as true human existence within the individual unit of society. The partial aspects which Marxism and National Socialism seize and emphasize as complete truth set the complete existence of man either on the material or animal level. Not only does this truncate his individual life, but the result in society is, in one form or another, the complete and annihilating subordination of the members to the whole. Much more, the bond of union can never have any higher form than brute force and terrorism.

St. Thomas, because he takes a higher view of man, takes a higher view of society and the bond of union within it. In this higher view of man, also, he retains the individual worth of each member, the while demanding the utmost of all for the perfection of societal living. Thomistic thought does not deny the corporeal; its difference from Marxism and National Socialism comes in the acknowledgment of the spiritual and immaterial.

On that plane it is moral principles that guide and direct and set the goal of man. On the plane Marxism and National Socialism are content with, material production or animal vitality are the driving forces and the whole life of man.

3. *Honesty and Reliability of the Pledged Word*

We have but to return again to our first chapter to find St. Thomas' contribution to the third requisite for society—honesty and reliability of the pledged word. There, what he says of the virtue of truth, the relations of truth and justice and the norms to judge untruth furnish exact standards in the application of

truth to social living.[35] What he does say, moreover, is in terms of truth itself, not in the blunted terms of class or race.

Truth as a virtue demands the special ordering of our acts, words and deeds as a sign to the thing signified. The comparison of simplicity and duplicity instituted by St. Thomas and the identification of the virtue of truth and simplicity throw light on its nature and function. By duplicity a man pretends one thing and intends another. By the virtue of truth—identified with simplicity—there is complete harmony between interior sentiment and exterior deed. We must depend on the virtue of truth to eliminate the deception and pretense which sunder social relations. In this light, because man is a social being, the virtue of truth is strictly demanded and society cannot perdure without it.

St. Thomas also relates this virtue to justice, thus emphasizing anew its social character. He can do so because the virtue of truth implies relation to another as justice does and establishes an equality as justice does also. The difference between the two is further lessened in the fact that the virtue of truth is annexed to justice.

The norms of untruth as St. Thomas sets them forth are another indication how concerned he is for the adjustment of truth to social life. Inherent in his analysis of the apprehension of truth is an implication of the basic maliciousness of lying. "Falsity can be in the intellect," he says, "not only because the knowledge of the intellect is false, but because the intellect is conscious of that knowledge, as it is conscious of truth."[36] Not only does a man know, but he knows that he knows and recognizes the adequation of knowledge to reality.[37] Because such is the operation of the mind, when a man recognizes falsity yet proclaims it as truth he is being false both to himself and to those whom his words reach. And his fault is a conscious and deliberate one.

[35] Chapter I, pp. 23–25; 33–34.

[36] ". . . falsitas in intellectu esse potest non solum quia intellectus falsa est, sed quia intellectus eam cognoscit, sicut et veritatem." *S. T.*, I, q. 17, a. 3.

[37] ". . . intellectus reflectitur supra actum suum, non solum secundum quod cognoscit actum suum, sed secundum quod cognoscit proportionem ad rem . . ." *De Ver.*, q. 1, a. 10.

Thus it is that St. Thomas considers a lie not only as unjust but as unnatural.

With such a firm standard St. Thomas examines carefully the various kinds of untruth and shows exactly the harm they do to social living. Dissimulation, hypocrisy, calumny, perjury, untruth connected with the process of law—he brings all under his careful scrutiny. Already we have seen much of his concern to guarantee truth for itself. Here he wishes to safeguard its transmission in society. The extent of his grasp is evidenced in the precision by which he goes from the demands of the virtue of truth to all the forms of untruth and the harm they are responsible for in society. Both positively and negatively he reinforces the third requisite demanded for society—honesty and reliability of pledged word.

4. *Belief in Human Dignity*

For the consideration of the above fourth requisite we return to our starting point in this work—St. Thomas' teaching on the life of the mind. What Thomistic thought has to offer for the conviction of human worth stands out clearly in a final review of the teaching we have repeated again and again in the course of this work.

In the scale of being of which we are a part we discover a progressive advancement from mere existence to vital action and on to intellectual activity. All material beings have this in common—that they exist. A class is set apart further by the possession of life in some form or another as well as existence. Another class is set apart again, not only by the possession of existence and life, but by a share in intelligence, the distinct life of the mind.

Any judgment of man and his activity, then, which disregards his unique prerogative of the life of the mind or slights it by overemphasis on his share in the lower levels of existence, is treason to him. Thomism's disagreement with Marxism, National Socialism and Humanism as philosophies of society has its origin in this charge: these systems are guilty of gross understatement on the true nature of man. That it can and does substantiate that charge it has been the burden of the previous chapters to prove. The mistake of Marxism is not in concerning itself with the ma-

terial existence of man; the error is in confining man and his whole life entirely to this level. The mistake of National Socialism and Humanism is not its recognition of the sensitive life of man; the error is in speaking of man and all man's activity in terms of animal existence.

Thomism recognizes and admits the material existence of man. Thomism recognizes and admits the sensitive life of man. But the contribution of Thomism is its insistence on the recognition and admission of much more—the quest of man for all knowledge and truth which set him apart from the rest of the material universe. The fact of man's ability to make that search is his greatest prerogative. The attainment of what he seeks—truth—is his highest perfection. Any goal short of this leaves man unsatisfied and eventually betrays him.

Here is St. Thomas' conviction of human dignity. "The human person," he says, "signifies that which is most perfect in the whole of nature."[38] That conclusion summarizes all the ample proof he gives of the unique activity of man's mind, all the implications he finds in that activity, all his care in defining and analyzing, all the applications he makes of that activity to the individual and social life of man. With his original premise that life adds something to merely existing, and intelligence adds something to merely living, he gives a dignity and stature to man that is really the index of his true worth and the norm of the society wherein he finds his completion.

[38] ". . . persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura." *S. T.*, I, q. 29, a. 3.

CONCLUSION

"Men," says E. Gilson,

> are most anxious to find truth, but very reluctant to accept it. We do not like to be cornered by rational evidence, and even when truth is there, in its impersonal and commanding objectivity, our greatest difficulty still remains; it is for me to bow to it in spite of the fact that it is not exclusively mine, for you to accept it though it cannot be exclusively yours. In short, finding out truth is not so hard; what is hard is not to run away from truth once we have found it. When it is not a "yes but," our "yes" is often a "yes, and . . . ;" it applies much less to what we have just been told than to what we are about to say.[1]

That is in a measure the psychological explanation of the state of affairs today. Truth has no real existence. There is your truth and there is my truth. But there is no truth that is yours and mine both. Every man's truth is true for him. But no man's truth is true for every man.

We cannot, we have not the right to accuse all those who differ of bad faith. But in the light of truth we can hold them in error and point to the sources and dire results of that error. Today a great section of society needs unity in the face of ever mounting threats to the basic assumptions on which it was founded. It is a truism to say it must be as one if action is to be effective. Moreover,

> the cause we are defending is far more fundamental than any form of government or any political creed. It is bound up with the whole tradition of Western and Christian culture—the tradition of social freedom and citizenship on the one hand, and that of spiritual freedom and the infinite value of the individual human person, on the other. No doubt Democracy as an ideal

[1] Gilson, E., *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribners, 1937), p. 61.

> does stand for those things and is the outcome of this tradition. But in practice modern democratic culture often represents only a debased and secularized version of this ideal and in many respects, as de Tocqueville saw more than a century ago, it prepares the way for the coming of the new mass order which achieves political form in the totalitarian State. What we are defending, in short, is not democracy but humanity. The basis of our unity—the common ground on which we are all agreed—is not a matter of political opinions, it is our resistance to a system which we feel to be inhuman and opposed to everything that Christian men hold dear. We can no longer, alas! say "civilized men," for we are faced with the grim fact to which the Liberal optimism of the last century shut its eyes—the fact that a society can become inhuman while preserving all the technical and material advantages of an advanced scientific civilization.[2]

What is true life? What is true liberty? What is the true pursuit of happiness? When all citizens answer those questions or have the answer to them, they will meet and unite on the level of human minds satisfied with the identical answer. Obviously, though, one of the first objections that suggests itself is: well, if truth *is* so difficult of attainment, how are we going to find it and answer those questions we so desperately need to answer?

The present answers are frightening to contemplate even in mere statement, apart from any consideration of their implications. One of the fruits of St. Thomas' truth theory is the previously quoted sentence which summarizes his ideal of man: "The human person signifies that which is most perfect in the whole of nature." Contrary to this, with the present debasement of truth which we have pointed out in the body of this work has come a consequent debasement of man himself.

Truth in the contemporary scene has been reduced to a mere matter of convenience, a fictional and arbitrary convention, to a mere "ideology," "derivation," or "rationalization" as a by-product of economic, sensual or other drives and residues.

[2] Dawson, C., *The Judgment of Nations* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1942), pp. 186-187.

> With the degradation of truth man is debased from the sublime seeker after truth as an absolute value to that of the hypocrite who uses "truth" as a beautiful smoke screen for the justification of his impulses and lust, profit and greed. In so far as modern philosophy propagated these conceptions, it has its own poisonous aspect and contributes to the depreciation of man and of truth itself.[3]

Thus we have the current conceptions of man, the logical consequences of such thinking. Man is "an electron-proton complex," "a combination of physico-chemical elements," "a reflex mechanism," "a variety of stimulus-response relationship," "a psycho-analytical libido," "a predominantly subconscious or unconscious organism controlled by alimentary and economic forces."[4] Even as a mere summary, is not the above a justification of our statement that present answers are frightening to contemplate? And comparing all the above with St. Thomas' "A person is that which is most perfect in the whole of nature," which of the two mutually exclusive solutions can guide and elevate man in the crisis of civilization now upon us?

Remember, too, St. Thomas' teaching on truth has no need to resort to the tactics of its modern opponents in personal abuse and name-calling. As a matter of fact the strength of its position is revealed, among other ways, in the profound pity it feels for the above aberrations of the highest faculty of man, his mind. Those aberrations paved the way for the present chaotic war. And those aberrations, unless corrected, cannot but deepen the confusion and suffering of man.

So confident is Thomistic thought of its worth that it offers itself as the best correction of such aberrations. Its appeal is made not in the strength of the might of arms behind it, but on the value of its true principles. In those true principles man can hope for the satisfaction of his mind; by their practical application he can achieve peace and happiness. If they are rejected man betrays himself and condemns himself to incessant anguish.

[3] Sorokin, P., *The Crisis of Our Age* (New York: E. P. Dutton Co., 1942), p. 246.

[4] Cfr. Sorokin, P., *op. cit.*, p. 121.

Since revolutions are now so popular, the revolutionary character of truth might be considered. Error and truth both effect revolution. One, though, is destructive; the other is constructive. One must compromise with passion; the other refuses to do so. One is so uncertain of itself as to border on the hysterical; the other is so sure of its ground as to even pity the misled. One promises immediate results; the other emphasizes human limitations. One ultimately and inevitably betrays man; the other is the only assurance of his perfection. One insists on breaking with the past; the other is rich with the continuity of human thought.

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